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ABSTRACT

This document, which is intended for business educators at all levels, outlines two approaches to facilitating international business communication by adopting a global approach in business communication and related business education courses. In the first half of the document, the following steps in implementing the separate-course approach, are examined: understanding the separate-course approach; securing approval for the new course; devising the purpose statement and course objectives; determining the primary instructional orientation; identifying instructional resources; selecting course content and instructional activities (culture, language, environment and technology, social organization, contexting and face-saving, authority conception, nonverbal communication, negotiating, sociobusiness skills, temporal conception, culture shock and reverse culture shock, and country-specific applications); and evaluating course content and instructional activities. Discussed in the second half of the document are the following topics related to implementing the infusion approach: understanding the infusion approach; implementing the infusion approach; and infusing international business communication into various courses (accounting, basic business and economics, business communications, computer literacy, keyboarding, marketing, microcomputer/technology applications, office occupations, teacher education, telecommunications, and training and development). Contains 38 figures/tables and 248 references. (MN)

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ED 401 398

FACILITATING INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS COMMUNICATION: A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

James Calvert Scott

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Facilitating International Business Communication: A Global Perspective

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Two people deserve credit for their important supporting roles in the preparation of this publication. Magdalena Juszczakiewicz cheerfully keyboarded numerous iterations of this document. Sherri Lee Arosteguy graciously created or adapted clip art illustrations for this publication.

My ideas about international business communication have been influenced by many professionals too numerous to name, including a number who maintain membership in Delta Pi Epsilon. I am indebted to them for their many indirect contributions to this publication. By freely sharing their insights with me and others, they have exhibited the true spirit of professionalism. It is with that spirit in mind that I undertook the preparation of this publication. I sincerely hope that by sharing some thoughts about the teaching of international business communication, I can assist you as you prepare others for the challenges of international business communication.

Much of the information in this publication reflects the foundations of the international business-communication discipline, which should withstand the test of time. Nevertheless, because the emerging discipline is in its infancy, over time its content and instructional methodology will change. This publication is intended as a general reference guide that reflects mainstream thinking about international business communication circa 1996.

James Calvert Scott

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Introduction

International business communication differs from intercultural and cross-cultural business communication in the sense that the former relates to communication between individuals who come from different countries and cultures while the latter two relate to communication between individuals who come from different cultures or subcultures but not necessarily different countries. For example, when Marybelle Clemmons, an African-American, conducts business with Enrique Roybal, a Mexican-American, the related business communication is best labeled as intercultural or cross-cultural business communication because while both are citizens of the U.S., they come from different American subcultures, which have dissimilar cultural backgrounds. If either of these businesspersons engages in business with Marcel Descartes, a French citizen, or Yun Boo Park, a Korean citizen, then the related business communication is best labeled as international business communication because the participants represent not only different cultures or subcultures but also different nationalities. In some cases, international business communication is more challenging than intercultural or cross-cultural business communication because the participants represent more divergent groups that have fewer shared beliefs, values, and assumptions. The absence of common perspectives complicates the transaction of business on many levels.

International business communication is a relatively new discipline that has come into prominence during the past decade. It emerged from the broad-based business-communication content area in response to (a) pleas from the business community for graduates with better international competencies and (b) pressures from accreditation groups, especially the American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), to internationalize instruction significantly.

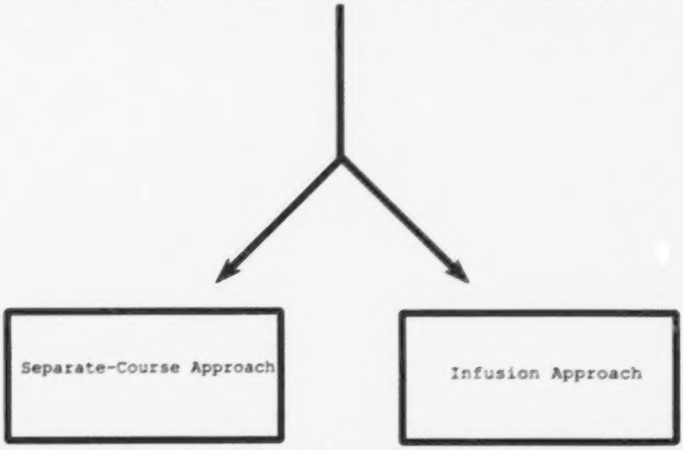
As the business community of the U.S. increasingly participates in the global marketplace, its members and others are beginning to realize that effective international business-communication skills are the backbone that supports the transaction of business around the world. International business communication fulfills a vital role; it facilitates international commerce. Without international business communication the transaction of worldwide business would be impossible.

Countries of the world are increasingly economically interdependent. In other words, they depend more and more on one another for many of the goods and services consumed by their populations. When countries allow their business communities to participate in business transactions with foreigners, those businesspersons are better able to satisfy the needs and wants of their customers, improving the quality of lives in the process. The importing and exporting of goods and services is facilitated by effective international business communication. Without it, the task is virtually impossible. Imagine the chaos and frustration that would result if people who wanted to trade with outsiders spoke different languages and had no efficient means of indicating that they wanted to exchange their goods and services for other visible goods and services. Pointing, shouting, and thievery might occur. Little or no equitable exchange of goods and services would likely happen, leaving dissatisfied and alienated would-be traders and disenchanted consumers with unfulfilled needs and wants.

Besides facilitating mutually acceptable international transactions, careful international business communication also facilitates other aspects of international business. Effective international business communication is instrumental in the smooth transfer and implementation of technology abroad. Astute international business communication eases the way for acquisitions of know-how, technology, and personnel from other countries. Conciliatory international business communication makes it possible for companies from around the world to constitute joint ventures to pursue new markets. Caring international business communication creates a supportive environment in which international trade can be used as a means for economic, social, and political development in underdeveloped countries. Simply stated, purposeful international business communication is a powerful tool that influences the transaction of business around the world in many senses.

Instruction about international business communication typically follows either the separate-course approach or the infusion approach, both of which are described in detail in the remainder of this publication. Those descriptions, which include suggested instruction-related content and activities, are followed by a brief concluding statement and references.

Figure 1
Choose the Separate-Course Approach or the Infusion Approach



You can facilitate international business communication through either the separate-course approach or the infusion approach.

The Separate-Course Approach

One approach to internationalizing business communication is to implement the separate-course approach.

Understanding the Separate-Course Approach

The separate-course approach involves the creation of one or more specialized courses devoted exclusively to international business communication-related content. For example, in the Department of Business Information Systems and Education at Utah State University, Logan, Utah, two separate courses exist. The undergraduate course, required of business education and marketing education majors and elective for others, focuses around interpersonal and cross-cultural business communication in the global work place. The graduate course, required of all departmental master's- and doctor's-degree students and elective for others, focuses around in-depth study of international business communication.

One advantage of the separate-course approach is that international business-communication content is the focal point of instruction. International business-communication content is the topic, not a peripheral topic. Having one or more separate international business communication-related courses allows the teacher to develop a wide variety of relevant topics in meaningful ways given the varying backgrounds and needs of students. This approach allows students to develop and to refine sophisticated international business communication-related knowledges, skills, and attitudes for both professional and personal purposes, which enhance their lifelong options. Offering one or more specialized courses in international business communication demonstrates real commitment to the internationalization of business education, which is perceived very favorably by members of both the business community and the accreditation groups.

Cost is the primary concern about offering one or more separate international business communication-related courses. Are the limited institutional resources best invested in one or more highly specialized international business-communication courses, beneficial as they may be? What are the tradeoffs? What is gained by offering one or more specialized courses, and what is lost by doing so? What impact will adding a new course have on the other business-education courses and on the business-education curriculum? Is there a qualified teacher who is ready, willing, and able to teach an international business communication-related course, or must an already employed teacher be retrained or a new qualified teacher be hired? What instructional-support resources are already available, and what must be obtained so that viable instruction can be made available? Another concern is how many students will enroll and benefit from such specialized instruction.

Assuming that overall the arguments in favor of offering one or more international business communication-related courses outweigh those opposed, the next step is to gain approval to offer a new international business communication-related course.

Figure 2
Consider the Advantages and Disadvantages of the Separate-Course Approach

You should carefully weigh the advantages and disadvantages of the separate-course approach.

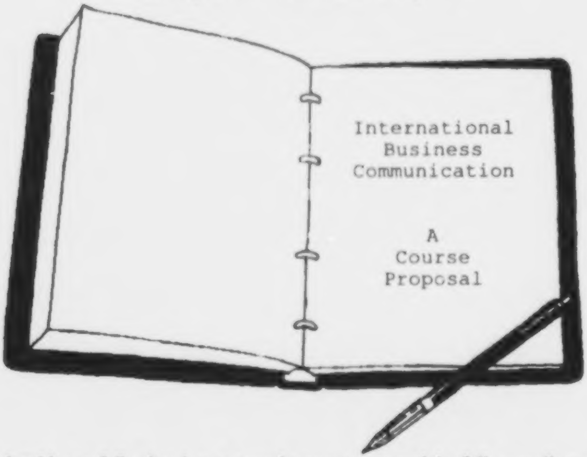
Securing Approval for the New Course

Complying with all of the details of the local curriculum-approval process is important. The teacher needs to find out what the appropriate procedural details are and to follow them carefully. The teacher should be aware of relevant deadlines such as the dates by which new courses must be approved by the involved groups. He or she should know when copy for additions to the published listing of courses must be submitted and in what form. The teacher should plan a tentative schedule for moving the proposal through the curriculum-approval process, allowing sufficient time for both planned and unplanned delays.

Developing a sound proposal is necessary in almost all educational environments since proposals to add new courses are scrutinized carefully. Although the details of what constitutes an appropriate proposal vary from one institution to another, common elements the teacher should include are such items as the course title, the course description, the course outline, the instructional-resource listing, the teacher qualifications, and the course-implementation costs.

The teacher should realize that selecting a favorable time for discussing the proposal with decision makers is also important. He or she should try to select a time when administrators and other interested parties are not unduly preoccupied by other matters and have sufficient time not only to listen to the related oral presentation but also to ask relevant questions. Having too little quality time to develop the case for adding an international business-communication course and to resolve related concerns often dooms new-course proposals to failure. Sometimes it is better for a teacher to postpone presenting a new-course proposal until conditions are more favorable than to accept the risks associated with bad timing.

Figure 3
Develop a Sound Course Proposal



You should carefully develop a sound course proposal in full compliance with institutional requirements.

Preparing persuasive arguments is critical since decision makers are more accepting of a new course if it seems relevant, necessary, and cost effective. The following are some of the many points that a teacher can present to support the addition of an international business communication-related course: (a) People live, work, and communicate in an increasingly internationalized world. (b) The business community must rapidly internationalize to compete in the global marketplace, and this cannot be done effectively unless employees develop and refine international business communication-related knowledges, skills, and attitudes, which are the backbone that supports the conduct of international business. (c) Virtually every study of business graduates and employees notes serious deficiencies in their communication abilities, and the communication gap widens as people increasingly communicate with people from diverse cultures and countries. (d) Offering an international business-communication course demonstrates commitment to the internationalization process, which is viewed favorably by both the business community and the accreditation groups.

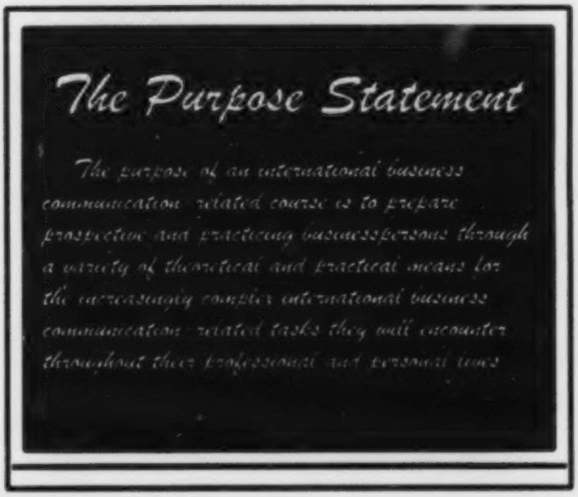
(e) A modest investment in an international business-communication course has the potential to pay a large return on investment to students, the business community, and society as a whole.

The teacher should follow up in a timely manner with appropriate action after the curriculum-approval decision has been made. Some teachers may need to think their proposals through more carefully and then revise those proposals so that they are more acceptable to the decision makers. These improved proposals can be reconsidered at a later date. Other teachers may need to forward proposals, perhaps with minor modifications, to others in the curriculum-approval hierarchy. When the proposal has been approved at the highest level, then the teacher can focus full attention on the details necessary to implement the newly approved international business communication-related course.

Devising the Purpose Statement and Course Objectives

What might be a brief statement of purpose for an international business communication-related course? The purpose of an international business communication-related course is to prepare prospective and practicing businesspersons through a variety of theoretical and practical means for the increasingly complex international business communication-related tasks they will encounter throughout their professional and personal lives.

Figure 4
Develop an Appropriate Purpose Statement



The Purpose Statement

The purpose of an international business communication-related course is to prepare prospective and practicing businesspersons through a variety of theoretical and practical means for the increasingly complex international business communication-related tasks they will encounter throughout their professional and personal lives

You should create a brief statement of purpose for an international business-communication course.

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A variety of course objectives can be devised for an international business communication-related course. These objectives ought to reflect the backgrounds and needs of the students, the level at which the instruction is provided, how the international business-communication course relates to other parts of the curriculum, the needs and desires of the international business community, and the like.

Here are six basic course objectives that with modification to reflect local conditions are suitable for most international business communication-related courses:

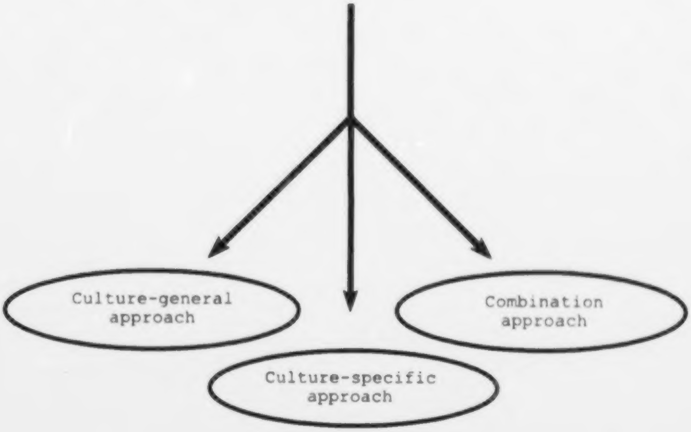
1. To develop an understanding of the dynamics of business communication in a culturally diverse world.
2. To develop an understanding of the major processes, theories, and concepts of international business communication.
3. To recognize the profound influence of culturally based factors on international business communication.
4. To minimize ethnocentrism (the belief that one's native culture is superior to other cultures) and to maximize respect for other cultures as creditable and legitimate ways of life.
5. To develop a mind set that is conducive to communicating effectively in the culturally diverse world of international business.
6. To develop strategies and techniques that facilitate effective communication in the global world of business.

Determining the Primary Instructional Orientation

After the teacher has identified the course purpose and specific course objectives, he or she needs to select the primary instructional orientation. The primary instructional orientation influences how the teacher goes about providing relevant instruction. One of three common orientations is typically used when teaching international business communication-related courses. Teachers can select from (a) the culture-general approach, (b) the culture-specific approach, or (c) the combination or culture-general and culture-specific approach. The advantages and disadvantages of each approach are briefly discussed in the following paragraphs.

The culture-general approach. The culture-general approach allows the teacher the maximum amount of freedom when developing course content. The teacher does not have to be an expert regarding any one particular culture. He or she can draw examples from any culture to illustrate a point. This generalist orientation works to the advantage of many teachers since they can choose the clearest examples for instructional purposes without regard to arbitrary cultural limitations. The teacher may enjoy having the freedom of choice of cultures as his or her knowledge about international business communication grows. Further, this approach is well suited to many students, who have little to no idea about the exact cultural contexts in which they will need to communicate for international business-related purposes. By exposing students to a wide variety of cultures, the teacher helps students to generalize content beyond the cited examples.

Figure 5
Choose the Culture-General Approach, the Culture-Specific Approach, or the Combination Approach



You can facilitate international business communication through the culture-general approach, the culture-specific approach, or the combination approach.

The primary criticism of the culture-general approach is that while it provides students with a broad, general view of variables influencing international business communication in multiple cultures, it fails to provide enough specific, in-depth information about cultural variables influencing international business communication in any one specific culture. As a result, some critics think that students are left with a hodgepodge of meaningless information, not a body of closely-related information that can be applied to resolve complex communication-related problems in the real world.

The culture-specific approach. The culture-specific approach attempts to relate all international business communication-related instruction to one specific culture. Since all instruction focuses around one culture, over time students become very knowledgeable about how its members engage in international business communication. Students become specialists in international business communication-related aspects of one culture, not generalists in international business communication-related aspects of many cultures. The culture-specific approach is ideally suited to the specialized training situation where all students will interact with members of the same cultural group for business purposes.

A major criticism of using the culture-specific approach to develop international business communication-related competencies is the requirement that all of the instruction be focused around one and only one culture. Is this realistic outside of the company-training or another highly specialized environment? Will most international business communicators interact with members of one nonnative culture only? Would the needs of most students be better served by a less specialized and more broadly based instructional approach? Finding a qualified teacher is often challenging since he or she must be an expert in the one selected culture. While many teachers have or can develop general understanding about a wide variety of cultures, most can develop highly specialized understanding of only one or two cultures in addition to their native cultures. The probability that the available teacher is an expert in the one needed culture is low.

The combination approach. The combination or culture-general and culture-specific approach tries to meld the other two approaches together to capture the strengths of each approach while minimizing the weaknesses of each approach in isolation. To balance international business communication-related instruction related to a wide-ranging group of cultures or countries around the world, the teacher also relates the selected content to a small group of focus cultures or countries, which remain constant throughout the instruction. Sometimes the teacher selects the three to six focus cultures or countries, and sometimes the students do. A variation of the combination approach has the teacher use wide-ranging cultures or countries to illustrate international business communication-related points in class and then has students apply those points to international business communication in a small group of cultures or countries, which remain consistent throughout the instruction. Although the combination or culture-general and culture-specific approach appears to be the one selected most often by teachers of international business communication-related courses, some have argued that through compromise the combination approach fails to achieve the full benefits that come from either the culture-general or the culture-specific approach alone. These critics prefer one of the other alternatives, either of which is perceived to be preferable to the tainted combination approach.

Identifying Instructional Resources

A variety of instructional materials is available to the teacher of an international business communication-related course. In response to growing interest in this important area, new materials are being developed regularly. Consequently, a teacher should periodically check such standard reference sources as *Books in Print* (1995); relevant indices, including the *Business Education Index* (Noll, 1995), the *Business Periodicals Index* (1994), the *Social*

Science Index (1995), and the *Communication Abstracts* (Gordon, 1996); online services, including ABI/INFORM and Lexis-Nexis; and audio-visual sources, including *Bowker's Complete Video Directory* (1994), *Video Source Book* (Furtaw, 1992), and Media Review Digest (Wall, 1995).

A listing of a wide variety of related literature and other resources that may be of interest to teachers of international business communication-related courses is found in the references section of this document. It is divided into subsections for books and periodicals and for media.

Figure 6
Choose a Variety of Instructional Resources

You should pick varied instructional resources to use in your international business-communication course.

Selecting Course Content and Instructional Activities

The teacher of an international business communication-related course will quickly discover that there are a myriad of major and minor topics that could be included. Deciding which ones to include and to what degree are both perplexing matters.

Regardless of the decisions made, the teacher must ensure that the chosen topics are all focused on how they influence international business communication. Each of the following subsections identifies a major topic that is often addressed in one manner or another in an international business communication-related course. Some--but certainly not all--of the possible subtopics are briefly discussed to suggest a few of the possible ways in which each main topic might be developed. General information about one or more related instructional activities for each main topic is provided to stimulate teacher thinking about methodology. Each of the teaching ideas has been left purposefully vague so that creative teachers can easily adapt it to their specific instructional environments.

The world around us. This is a brief introductory unit designed to make students aware that they really know very little about the world that exists around them. Through several activities the students realize how limited their frames of reference are and how uninformed they are about the world beyond their doorsteps. As a result, they realize that it is in their best interest to expand their horizons by developing a more cosmopolitan perspective. By learning more about the world, its people, their cultures, and their behaviors, students are better positioned to communicate effectively with those from other cultures and countries.

Figure 7
Think About What You Know About the World Around You

Most people know very little about the world that exists around them.

One effective way to cause students to realize that they possess limited views of the world is to give them a quiz about their global understanding. Potential quiz items could relate to current events, world facts and figures, and course content. Students may feel informed when they begin the quiz; but by the time it has been checked and discussed in class, they should be convinced that they need to know much more about the world in which they live, which motivates them to learn.

Since the informal quiz is self-checked and only for informational purposes, the individual student alone needs to know the percent of correct responses, which spares him or her from public embarrassment.

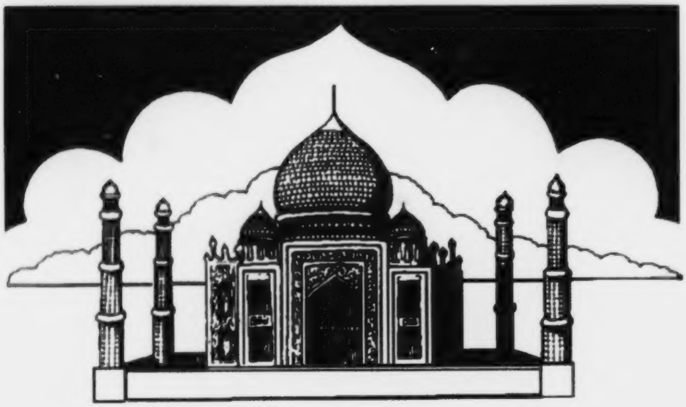
Another potentially effective activity is for the teacher to ask students to create world maps on blank sheets of paper. Many variations of this activity are in existence, but most specify a number of tasks that each student should do, such as write the names of the continents in script, print the names of the countries in upper- and lower-case letters, mark the locations of the capital cities with stars, and write the respective capital city names nearby in underlined script. After 5-to-10 minutes of working time, most students will exhaust their knowledge of the world and stop working on their maps.

When most students have finished their work, the teacher can have them hold up their maps so the others can see them. Then the teacher can unveil a world map and ask students to compare their versions with an authentic map. The teacher might begin the discussion by asking students how their maps are like and unlike the authentic one. The teacher might ask the students to name the continents, finding out which ones are frequently omitted. By probing why students tend to exclude more distant continents, the teacher can help students realize that while they are often generally familiar with their immediate surroundings, their knowledge of areas further removed diminishes rapidly as evidenced by their maps. Other matters the teacher might probe are why most map makers place their home country in the center of the map and whether or not this suggests an ethnocentric or self-centered view of the world. He or she might question what reluctance to participate in the map-drawing activity means. The teacher can also have students speculate about the purpose of the map-drawing activity, what they learned from participating in it, and what they will do as a result of what they have just learned.

By this point most students feel the need to expand their world views considerably. The teacher can initiate that process by dividing the students into teams and then having the teams play Global Pursuit (1987), an educational game from The National Geographic Society. The teams can play as individuals typically would, rotating among the team members the rolling of the die, the responding to trivia questions, and the matching of map cards. Because the game has three levels of questions about such diverse topics as the planet earth, people and places, historic happenings, and people and products, it is suitable for middle-school through adult audiences. Players thoroughly enjoy the game of Global Pursuit; in fact, they often plead for an opportunity to play during another class period. If a teacher wants to tangibly reward members of the winning team, he or she might give each of them two pieces of wrapped bite-sized candy; other players can be encouraged to learn more about the world around them with one piece of similar candy.

Culture. The purpose of a unit about culture in an international business communication-related course is to help students understand what a culture is and how it profoundly influences the lives of its members, including their communicative behaviors. A culture is the way of life of a group. It is comprised of the underlying learned, shared, interrelated, and unifying beliefs, values, and assumptions that cause its members to behave--including communicate--in usually predictable ways, as well as the tangible artifacts of its members. A culture is assimilated throughout a lifetime by direct and indirect means and often is not readily shared with outsiders. Each culture has a number of subcultures or subgroups, such as its business community, which typically select behaviors from those acceptable within the mainstream culture from which it evolved.

Figure 8
Consider the Communication-Related Effects of Culture



You should understand the profound effects that culture has on the business-communication practices of a society.

The teacher of an international business communication-related course might begin by addressing the matter of what a culture is via lecture and discussion. After that has been established, one option is to discuss subcultures or constituent parts of the general or mainstream culture. The identification of a number of subcultures and their characteristics, especially ones to which the students belong, such as age groups, gender groups, religious groups, and the like, can help students better understand cultures and subcultures.

One subculture to which the students belong or are apt to belong is the business subculture. A teacher-directed discussion about what constitutes its membership requirements; what are its fundamental beliefs, values, and assumptions; and how those beliefs, values, and assumptions are acquired and then transferred to others over time can be insightful for many. Those with work experiences may be able to share reinforcing personal experiences that complement the discussion.

A possible teacher-directed application activity could require the students to interview members of the local business community to find out what their fundamental beliefs, values, and assumptions are. By sharing the resulting information with others during a follow-up classroom discussion, students would better understand the mainstream beliefs, values, and assumptions of the U.S. business subculture.

Since cultural groups often reinforce and transfer their beliefs, values, and assumptions with proverbs, maxims, and sayings, the teacher might ask students to find examples of business-related proverbs, maxims, and sayings that embody the underlying beliefs, values, and assumptions of the mainstream U.S. business subculture and then to interpret them. For example, the saying, "where there is a will, there is a way," suggests that the U.S. business subculture values individual initiative and self-directed effort, which results in related accomplishments. For related instructional ideas and examples, refer to Scott (1989c).

When the students have demonstrated their understanding of the U.S. business subculture to the satisfaction of the teacher, then he or she can point out through a variety of means that other business subcultures have different sets of beliefs, values, and assumptions that shape their interactions with others. Describing specific differences in business-related behaviors, including communication-related behaviors, of members of various business subcultures can be valuable at this point. Contrasts between the U.S. and Japanese business subcultures could be effective because in many senses they have fundamentally different perspectives. An important idea to emphasize is that while various cultures and subcultures have differing views about how business should be conducted, those sets of views are simply different--not good or bad. Effective business communicators must learn to be at least tolerant and ideally accepting of other ways of conducting business--even if those ways are generally considered inappropriate within their own personal business subcultures.

The need to bridge the gap between cultures in general and business subcultures in particular is a cornerstone of international business communication. How this can be accomplished in the business world is illustrated effectively in such films as "Bridging the Culture Gap" (1983) and "Managing the Overseas Assignment" (1983). Viewing both films can yield lively class interaction when a teacher asks thoughtful follow-up questions.

Experiencing profound cultural differences firsthand will be insightful for many students, especially if they have not had previous international experiences. A simulation with debriefing, such as Jameson's (1993) cocktail party with business representatives from three fictional cultures interacting over drinks prior to business meetings, can graphically demonstrate that people respond both rationally and irrationally when fundamentally different cultures interact.

The completion of a cultural adaptability instrument, such as Kelly and Meyer's (1993) cross-cultural adaptability instrument and related items, can help students, especially mature ones, understand the degree to which they are tolerant of other cultures and to devise individualized strategies to increase their openness to other cultures.

A teacher might ask mature students to read Miner's (1956) classic article about the Nacirema (American spelled backwards), which points out how odd others must find certain aspects of the U.S. culture. In a related discussion a teacher should emphasize that scrutinizing cultures is a two-way process.

Language. The purpose of a unit about language in an international business communication-related course is to make students aware of important relationships between language and international business communication. Some experts believe that language reflects the highest manifestation of a culture and its essence. Especially in cultures and subcultures that value direct, explicit communication, such as those of the U.S. and its business community, language is perceived as the primary means of communication. How the tool of language can be effectively used to facilitate international business communication is of major importance to both the individual and his or her employer.

Where might the teacher begin to develop relevant language-related content? One possibility is to begin with information about the ways in which different cultures and subcultures view languages. Some cultures and subcultures choose to be monolingual; some choose to be bilingual; others choose to be multilingual. Exploring the strengths and weaknesses of each of these orientations, perhaps through case studies or an article such as Lee's (1991) "Montreal: Spirited Heart of French Canada," can help students realize the ramifications of different choices. Comparing and contrasting the mainstream language-related positions in the U.S., Canada, and Switzerland, for example, exposes students to significantly different language-related perceptions.

Discussing which language(s) should be used for business-communication purposes is often a controversial matter. While English is widely regarded as the dominant language of international business, many who could conduct business with it prefer not to use it or refuse to use it for a variety of reasons. A lively classroom debate on the proposition that native English speakers have a competitive advantage in the international marketplace can focus attention on a number of relevant factors and issues.

Since in actuality there are many forms of the English language (see Kameda 1992), some teachers of international business communication-related courses focus attention on its most influential forms. A teacher might, for example, compare and contrast the American and British versions as used for business-communication purposes. For those interested in doing so, articles by Scott (1991; 1993b; 1994a) and Scott and Green (1992a) may be useful.

When more than one language is used, either translation, the process of converting the written form of one language into its equivalent written form in another language, or interpretation, the process of converting the oral form of one language into its equivalent oral form in another language, comes into play. The teacher will need to differentiate between the two processes, discuss both processes in detail, and offer suggestions for making effective use of the professional services of translators and interpreters.

Firsthand experiences with translation help students to understand the complexities of converting written materials from one language to another. A teacher can accomplish this with a translation activity such as that devised by McCollough (1988). After students have converted the brief German business letter to American English using the provided conversion dictionary, a teacher can have them share and discuss their translations.

A teacher can expand McCollough's activity by raising a number of related questions. For example, differences in types of translations can be noted by asking questions about literal translations and free-form translations. Country-specific practices can be uncovered through questions about differences in the letter layouts, letter parts, and letter-part sequences of the German and U.S. versions of the letter. Speculating about the consequences of formatting a translated document in a manner that is acceptable in one country but not acceptable in another could prove interesting. Questions about cultural bias in translation as illustrated by the conversion dictionary translation of the complimentary close with the British English, not American English, equivalent would also be appropriate.

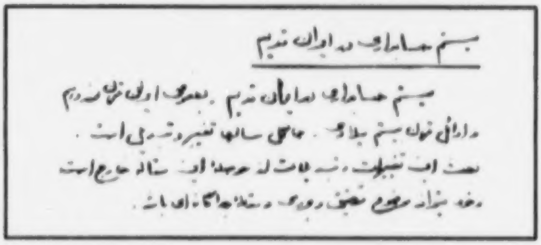
Occasionally teachers of international business communication-related courses, especially advanced courses, introduce students to simplified or controlled languages. A simplified language is a bare-bones version of the original written language with simplified language structure and limited or controlled vocabulary; it can be comprehended by nonnative speakers of the main language from which it is derived after 30 to 40 hours of instruction.

Some companies that operate around the world, such as Eastman Kodak Company and Caterpillar, Inc., have developed their proprietary simplified versions of the English language. Kodak International Service Language (KISL), for example, is used for communicating information about product repair and service to Kodak employees around the world, bypassing the challenges of translating all of the multitudinous documents into countless languages and dialects.

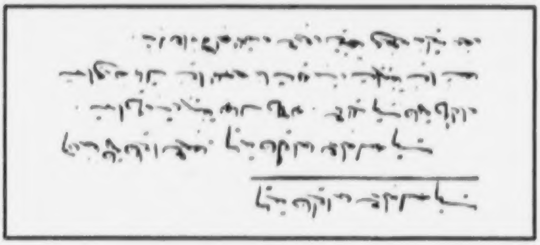
If a teacher includes the topic of simplified or controlled languages, he or she would probably develop understanding of the concept of simplified languages, discuss how one or more businesses use them to facilitate international business communication, and perhaps show students actual business documents in one or more simplified languages. This would allow students to better understand the structure and application of simplified languages.

Figure 9
Evaluate the Appropriateness of Foreign-Language Printing

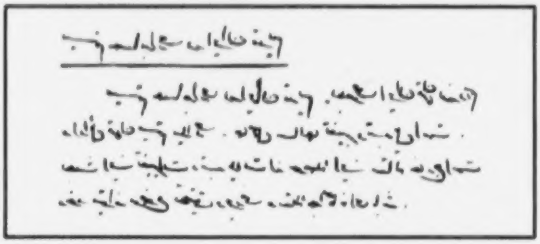
A



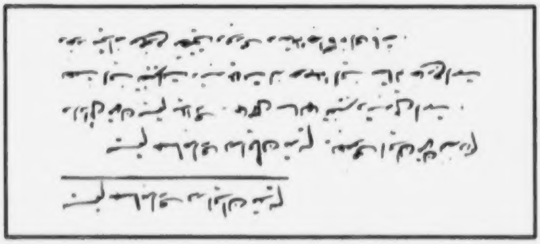
B



C



D



Adapted from Foroughi (1991).

Can you identify which sample of Farsi (Modern Persian) is printed correctly?

(Sample A is correctly oriented for printing purposes)

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Another language dimension for possible inclusion in an advanced international business communication-related course is information about printing materials in foreign languages. Such a specialized topic could be developed through lecture about and discussion of related material. The topic might be made meaningful for students by asking them to make value judgments about the appropriateness of the printing of one or more foreign-language documents. If a printer in the area specializes in foreign-language printing, then the teacher might ask if he or she is willing to be a guest speaker.

The development and preparation of foreign-language multimedia materials is a related topic suitable for advanced students. The teacher might use similar instructional approaches to those suggested for foreign-language printing. A speaker from a business specializing in foreign-language multimedia materials or a field trip to observe the development and preparation of foreign-language multimedia materials would breathe life into this topic for students.

Perhaps the culmination of the language-related unit in an international business communication-related course would be the development of ideas for overcoming language-related barriers to international business communication. Either the teacher or the students individually or in groups could devise and present a series of relevant guidelines for using the tool of language to facilitate better international business communication.

Environment and technology. The purpose of a unit about environment and technology in an international business communication-related course is to make students aware of the influences of these two factors on cultures and their related communication systems. Attitudes toward environment and technology shape the way of life of a culture and influence how it communicates for business and other purposes. Environment and technology influence business communication because they help to determine what is possible and impossible within a culture. In some cultures, such as that of the U.S., the dominant attitude is that people should control their environments and use technology liberally to gain the full benefits from resources; in others, such as that of contemporary fundamentalist Iran, the people manipulate their environments and use technology sparingly out of concern about interfering with Allah's (God's) will; in still others, such as India, the benefits of using the environment and technology are balanced against other factors to bring about societal harmony.

A teacher might begin a unit about influences of environment and technology by making students aware of the varying physical characteristics and natural resources found around the world. From this world-geography orientation, the teacher might direct student attention toward specific countries, their natural resources, and their dominant attitudes toward their environments. Comparing and contrasting the range of positions and prevailing attitudes, such as briefly illustrated in the preceding paragraph, makes students aware of the divergent viewpoints that influence human behaviors. Discussing related matters as they apply in one or more other countries can be beneficial, especially when coupled with related reading materials such as Thompson's (1991) article about pollution in Eastern Europe.

Figure 10
Think About the Influences of Environment and Technology

You should ponder the many ways in which attitudes toward environment and technology influence how cultures communicate for business purposes.

How cultures acknowledge technology is also important, and relationships among perceptions of technology, culture, and the physical environment should be established by the teacher through such means as lecture and discussion supported with a number of concrete examples from around the world. The teacher could use readings or case studies about how various cultures or countries have responded to technology to reinforce key points.

Next the teacher of an international business communication-related course might link together prevailing attitudes in various countries toward environment and technology and how they influence communication involving business. While general attitudes toward business communication, such as its societal importance, should be incorporated into the unit content, so should information about its specific characteristics, such as its frequency, its common forms, its mediums, and the like.

The teacher will probably choose to close a unit about environment and technology by focusing attention on how the range of perceptions about environment and technology can be accommodated through effective international business communication. The development of guiding principles, either by the teacher, the students, or a combination of the teacher and the students, would bring about a sense of closure for the unit. The students can be actively involved via individual, small-group, or large-group contributions at the discretion of the teacher.

Social organization. The purpose of a unit about social organization in an international business communication-related course is to cause students to realize the influence of its many dimensions on business communication around the globe. How a society perceives and assigns roles and responsibilities and how its related institutions evolve to order and regulate behaviors within the society are sometimes visible, even to casual observers. All of these means for shaping the behaviors of members of a society affect how they communicate with others for business and other purposes.

What are common elements of social organization that are relevant for inclusion in an international business communication-related course? Family structure with its related business and communication ramifications is one. For example, the teacher might talk about nuclear and extended families and then ask students to identify several cultures or countries to illustrate each family orientation. Contrasting relationships between family and business in the U.S. and Mexico and speculating why business and family tend to be separate in the U.S. but traditionally one in the same in Mexico helps some students to better understand the relevance of social organization.

Educational systems and related ties often influence communication networks of individuals. Having students research and report about the importance of graduating from Tokyo University in Japanese business circles or from Cambridge or Oxford in British business circles, for example, sets the stage for a cross-cultural comparison with U.S. business circles. Graduation from prestigious institutions such as Harvard or Stanford, while helpful, certainly is not necessary for either employment or advancement in U.S. business circles.

Another interesting dimension of social organization is class systems and related economic stratification. The teacher might lead a discussion about these, starting with the familiar U.S. perspective, moving to the Danish perspective, and concluding with the British perspective. This discussion covers the continuum between (a) democratic cultures with weak class systems and no hereditary monarchy and (b) democratic cultures with strong class systems and a hereditary monarchy and points between. The teacher could also explore how the type of class system and related economic stratification influence general and business communication within each of these cultures.

Gender roles assigned by cultures are a topic of interest to many, and a teacher will find that most students are eager to learn more about them. Reading an article about Japanese women, such as the one by Fallows (1990), creates a learning environment in which students are eager to share their thoughts about the roles of women in both Japan and the U.S. Probing questions from the teacher about why these two successful business cultures assign significantly different roles to their female members and the communication-related ramifications can generate both heated dialogue and new insights. How gender roles relate to communication in general and business communication in particular also are worthwhile topics for the teacher and students to ponder.

Figure 11
Realize That Educational Ties Shape Communication Networks

You should realize that the communication networks of businesspersons are shaped in part by their linkages to educational institutions and their graduates.

Information about major world religions and their influences on business and communication relationships can broaden the horizons of many students. Since many teachers possess limited knowledge about relevant aspects of such diverse religions as Buddhism, Islam, and Hinduism, this might be an appropriate topic for a guest speaker to address. Having students read about the basic tenets of major world religions, perhaps in a work similar to Terpstra and David's (1991) book chapter about world religions, prior to hearing the guest speaker's presentation helps to create a conceptual framework into which students can place and organize the presentation contents.

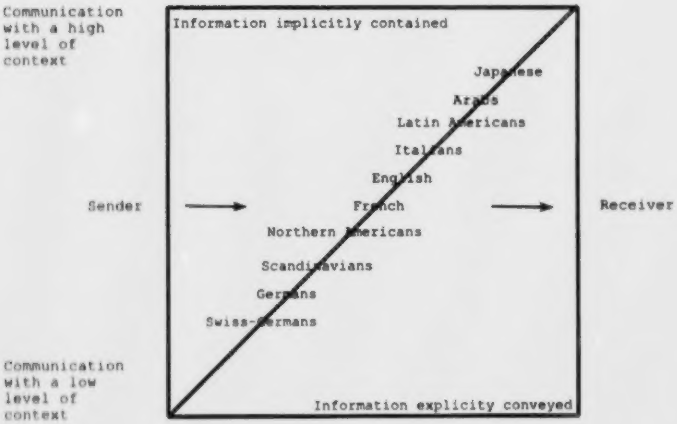
Governmental and legal systems can also be incorporated into an international business communication-related course as other manifestations of social organization. Understanding of both of these broad kinds of systems can be developed through readings and presentations about such aspects as the characteristics of their common types and component parts, how those characteristics influence businesses and people, and how domestic and international business communication are affected. While a teacher might choose to include such types of government as the democracy, the dictatorship, the socialistic state, and the monarchy, he or she might choose to include such types of legal systems as code law, common law, religious law, and socialistic law. Given the complexities of governmental and legal systems, many teachers might choose to make use of one or more outside experts such as an international political scientist or an international lawyer when addressing these topics.

A teacher of an international business communication-related course will want to wrap up a unit about social organization such that the students can use their understanding of social organization as a tool to help them solve the challenges of international business communication. The formulation, discussion, and application of related guidelines, whether originated by the teacher or by the students, is one possible approach.

Contexting and face-saving. The purpose of a unit about contexting and face-saving in an international business communication-related course is to make students aware of these powerful tools for understanding and explaining communicative behaviors of people around the world. Based on the work of Hall (1959, 1966, 1976, 1983) and others, contexting relates to the relative directness and explicitness or indirectness and implicitness of communication, which can be plotted along a directness-indirectness continuum much like a new point can be plotted between existing points. The more directly and explicitly a culture transmits information, the lower it is in terms of context or stored information, with meaning being derived from some combination of both transmitted and stored information. Closely and directly related to contexting is face-saving, the relative importance of minimizing personal embarrassment. In high-contexted cultures, those that rely significantly on stored as opposed to transmitted information, face-saving is very important; in low-contexted cultures face-saving is relatively much less important. The constructs of contexting and face-saving help to explain the communication-related behaviors of members of various cultural groups because they focus attention on key dimensions of human communicative systems worldwide.

In an international business communication-related course, a teacher might begin by talking about the concept of contexting and how directly and indirectly members of cultures communicate. In doing so, the teacher will need to be careful to supply a number of concrete examples of cultures that tend to communicate directly and explicitly and indirectly and implicitly, as well as specific supporting examples of communicative behaviors. To check student comprehension of contexting, a teacher could have students speculate whether the mainstream U.S. culture tends to be low contexted or high contexted and cite specific communicative behaviors to support their positions. When the mainstream U.S. culture has been established as a low-contexted culture--but certainly not the lowest--then a teacher might superimpose other mainstream cultures onto the contexting continuum, anchoring the lower end with the Germanic cultures and the higher end with the Japanese culture. Other world cultures can be placed on

Figure 12
Understand the Importance of Contexting in Worldwide Business Communication


Communication with a high level of context
Information implicitly contained
Japanese
Arabs
Latin Americans
Italians
English
Sender
French
Receiver
Northern Americans
Scandinavians
Germans
Swiss-Germans
Communication with a low level of context
Information explicity conveyed

Adapted from Rosch and Segler (1987).

You should know that cultures around the world communicate with differing degrees of explicit and implicit information.

the continuum by the teacher or by the students if they possess sufficient information about communication patterns of multiple cultures. While this is being done, the citing of specific concrete examples of communicative behaviors is helpful to enrich student understanding of contexting.

Next, the teacher can develop the idea of face-saving, minimizing personal embarrassment, which is especially associated with Middle Eastern and Eastern cultures, which tend to be high-contexted cultures. The sharing of relevant experiences involving face-saving in a variety of cultures helps some students to better understand the importance of minimizing personal embarrassment.

Since the U.S. and Japanese cultures are in some senses nearly opposites, the teacher can use them effectively to illustrate applications of contexting and face-saving, shedding light on their communicative systems in the process. For example, since the U.S. culture is a low-contexted and low face-saving one, it relies primarily on direct, explicit, detailed word-based communication. It, then, logically values contracts and strict enforcement of laws and regulations, which are also based around precise words. It dislikes silence, the absence of words, and perceives it to be noncommunicative. Because it views directness as honest and inoffensive, which minimizes the potential loss of face, it communicates directly in an oftentimes confrontational manner. In contrast, the Japanese culture, a high-contexted and high face-saving culture, takes the opposing point of view on all of these matters.

The teacher should also point out that contexting and face-saving principles allow insight into the communicative behaviors of others. For example, Saddam Hussein's threats before, during, and after the Gulf War should be discounted; as a member of the Iraqi culture, a high-contexted and high face-saving culture, intentions are much more important than the ability to carry them out. His idle threats represented posturing on his part; he wanted to crush "Satan America" and others, but he lacked the military and other resources to do so. To counteract the humiliating challenges and defeat that he and his troops experienced, he tried to save face by continuing to talk tough and to issue many threats, threats that in all likelihood he could not carry out.

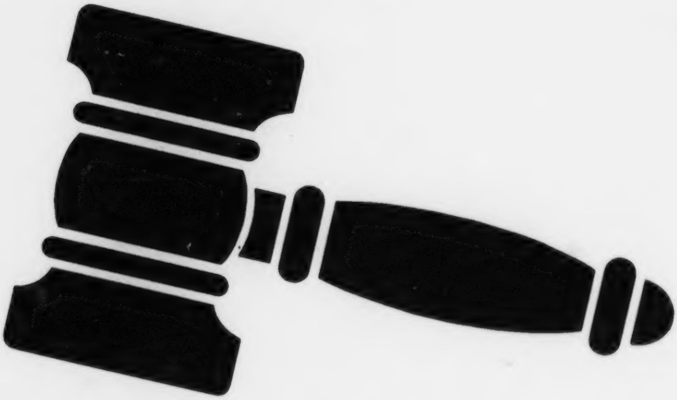
While developing the concepts of contexting and face-saving, as with other topics, the teacher must be careful to avoid the pitfalls of stereotyping. While certain overall cultural patterns are apparent, he or she needs to emphasize that there are clearly individual and subcultural variations to those patterns that must be acknowledged. While students can apply the patterns as useful general guidelines, they must realize that because of individual differences within a culture, those general guidelines may need modification when applied to one person or to a small group of people.

Since effective advertising campaigns are sensitive to the communicative patterns of particular cultures and subcultures, they are appropriate vehicles to which principles of contexting can be applied. A teacher could have students devise an advertising campaign to market a global product to three different cultures or countries that have differing degrees of directness and indirectness in their communication. Germany, Canada, and Saudi Arabia or Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and Korea would be good choices since each grouping of three represents significantly different points along the contexting continuum and exposes students to potentially less-familiar cultures.

The development of strategies for accommodating differences in contexting and face-saving in international business communication would be a suitable way to end this unit. The teacher might divide the students into teams that develop either comprehensive sets of strategies or strategies relating to one or two specific dimensions of contexting and face-saving.

Authority conception. The purpose of a unit about authority conception in an international business communication-related course is to emphasize how perceptions about who wields authority, power, and leadership impact international business communication. Some cultures, such as that of the U.S., tend to place authority in institutions rather than individuals; other cultures, such as that of the People's Republic of China, tend to place authority in individuals rather than institutions. How cultures exhibit authority, power, and leadership influences their communicative systems and how outsiders should interact with them.

Figure 13
Consider the Role of Authority Conception



You should realize that how authority, power, and leadership are manifest varies from culture to culture and impacts international business communication.

A teacher of an international business communication-related course might begin a unit about authority conception by developing definitions of such key terms as authority, power, and leadership through explanation and example. Then he or she could discuss cultural differences in perceptions of authority, power, and leadership, perhaps focusing attention on the profound differences between most Western and Eastern cultures as briefly suggested in the previous paragraph. Differences in prevailing beliefs, values, and assumptions in most Oriental countries could be highlighted by assigning a reading about authority conception as manifested in a typical country. An article such as Terrill's (1991a) "China's Youth Wait for Tomorrow" focuses attention on generational conflicts in China regarding authority-conception issues and the impending transition of power and leadership when Deng Xiaoping dies; such an article makes the topic come alive for students because they empathize with and better understand the positions of others when they step into their shoes and face their plights. Such an article also creates a realistic context to which most authority-conception dimensions can be related.

Although awareness of significant differences in authority conception and related factors among cultures is helpful, developing some rules of thumb to guide interactions with those who have differing perceptions of authority, power, and leadership is useful, especially if related to management and to communication in international settings. The teacher might ask small groups of students to develop some useful rules of thumb that are then constructively criticized and refined by the entire group of students during discussion. If the teacher chooses to have the students focus the rules of thumb around one specific culture, then those rules of thumb might be evaluated by a visiting international businessperson who has considerable experience managing and communicating with members of the selected culture.

Nonverbal communication. The purpose of a unit about nonverbal communication in an international business communication-related course is to help students understand that even in low-contexted cultures such as that of the U.S. much of the communicative meaning is conveyed by nonword means. In fact, research suggests that typically about 60 to 80 percent of meaning is conveyed nonverbally. This means that various forms of nonverbal communication are powerful tools whose importance should not be overlooked by international business communicators.

Most students find that the topic of nonverbal communication is among the most interesting of those incorporated into an international business communication-related course, and a teacher can use this interest to his or her advantage during discussions about various types of nonverbal communication. Because every student has relevant firsthand experiences with different dimensions of nonverbal communication at home and sometimes abroad, he or she is typically able to share those personal experiences, developing more-refined understanding about the topic in the process. After either providing definitions of relevant dimensions of nonverbal communication or soliciting them from the students, the teacher can ask for volunteers to demonstrate related applications, which are thoughtfully analyzed or otherwise discussed.

Since the names of most of the categories of nonverbal communication are initially unfamiliar to students, a teacher may want to devote extra attention to nonverbal communication terminology, its derivation, its pronunciation, and its meaning. He or she should encourage students to make use of the correct terminology, in the process shifting these technical words from the passive listening and reading vocabularies to the active speaking and writing vocabularies of students. Among the words and expressions on which the teacher might focus special attention are the following: kinesics (body movements), oculesics (eye movements), haptics (touching behaviors), proxemics (space relationships), paralanguage (nonword vocalizations), and passive nonverbal communication (symbolic use of colors, numbers, emblems, and smells). A teacher might also discuss appearance and manner of dress as means of nonverbal communication, especially if they are not addressed elsewhere in the course.

A teacher can also generate interest in various types of nonverbal communication by sharing interesting stories of cross-cultural faux pas. To point out that even people in powerful positions sometimes make egregious nonverbal communication errors, a teacher might recount embarrassing blunders committed by presidents of the U.S. For example, when George Bush made his ill-fated Pacific Rim trip to generate jobs for Americans through increased international trade, vomiting at the state dinner in Japan was only one of several shocking behaviors. While responding to an enthusiastic crowd in Australia, he gestured with a V-for-victory sign with his palm toward himself; suddenly the cheering crowd turned against him because his gesture there meant the same thing that the rude extension of the middle finger does in the U.S. While traveling in Latin America, Richard Nixon sent the same culturally unacceptable nonverbal message, this time with the thumb and index finger drawn together to form a circle, the U.S. sign for okay.

A teacher can find many useful sources of information about nonverbal communication that can enrich the learning environment. Among these are foreign movies, international general-circulation and business magazines, etiquette books, and the like. A guest speaker who has worked abroad could point out similarities and differences in the nonverbal business communication of natives of the U.S. and natives of another country.

To emphasize the need for international visitors to prepare themselves for differences in nonverbal behaviors, a teacher might culminate the unit with several videotaped role-playing exercises in which some participants would be U.S. businesspersons and some would be businesspersons from other countries. In one exercise, for example, an Italian businessman might greet an American businesswoman, kissing her lightly on both cheeks. As the taped greeting is played back, half of the observers could focus their attention on the Italian and his nonverbal behaviors, and half could focus their attention on the American and her nonverbal behaviors. During the ensuing debriefing, observers can discuss the exhibited nonverbal communications and how they were interpreted by the other businessperson as the videotape is replayed and paused for discussion purposes.

Negotiating. The purpose of a unit about negotiating in an international business communication-related course is to prepare students for the challenging task of reaching agreements with people from other cultures and countries. Because representatives of various cultures have differing beliefs, values, and assumptions, finding ways to bridge the many differences to the point that mutually acceptable solutions can be found is often challenging. Nevertheless, negotiating on an international basis is a commonplace activity that is part and parcel of conducting business internationally, an important activity from which most international businesspersons cannot escape. Consequently, it is in the best interest of all for students to develop and refine their cross-cultural negotiating skills.

Figure 14
Understand the Cross-Cultural Meaning of Gestures

You should know how your gestures will be interpreted in another culture.

In an international business communication-related course, a teacher could begin a unit about negotiating by pointing out that many cultures have their own idiosyncratic negotiation styles that are different from those of other cultures. Drawing examples from different negotiating styles, the teacher can cite specific instances where each of several cultures deals with selected negotiating-related dimensions in markedly different ways. He or she can also note, again with relevant examples, that various cultures have differing perceptions about the characteristics of good negotiators, of the negotiation situation, and of the negotiating process.

The teacher will likely address such matters as the components of the negotiating process and negotiating strategies and tactics in some detail, again relying on specific examples to make the points meaningful for students. This information could be complemented by a film or videotape about cross-cultural negotiating.

After the conceptual and theoretical aspects of negotiating have been developed, the teacher is likely to introduce some type of application activity. A negotiation simulation and debriefing is useful in this respect because it gives students an opportunity to experiment with different components of negotiations without serious consequences, learning considerably from their firsthand experiences in the process. One effective cross-cultural negotiation simulation, found in Hoopes and Ventura's (1979) *Intercultural Sourcebook*, is titled "The Emperor's Pot." This simulation pits Eastern negotiators against Western negotiators with interesting results and illustrates many of the variables and issues

Figure 15
Think About the Ramifications of Negotiating Internationally

You should contemplate the complexities of negotiating across cultures and countries.

encountered in real cross-cultural negotiations. When followed by a carefully structured teacher-led debriefing session, active participation in such a negotiation simulation can help students to improve their cross-cultural negotiating skills significantly.

If the students are mature and experienced businesspersons, then the teacher might ask each to write a critique of his or her own personal negotiating style. After describing the individual negotiating style, the student can constructively criticize that style, noting both its strengths and weaknesses. If circumstances warrant, the teacher can also ask each student to create a detailed action plan that would improve his or her personal negotiating style.

Sociobusiness skills. The purpose of a unit about sociobusiness skills in an international business communication-related course is to develop an awareness of the contributions of social business skills to international business communication. Well-developed sociobusiness skills are in effect a lubricant that facilitates effective cross-cultural business communication by helping to minimize differences between representatives of various cultures.

To initiate a unit about sociobusiness skills, a teacher could begin with information about customary business hours, preferred meeting formats, and related meal functions in major trading countries around the world. While the teacher will probably be the source of most of this information, students who have traveled abroad and students from other countries can increase the diversity of information. A teacher could start with the most familiar perspectives, those of the U.S., and move to increasingly less-familiar perspectives.

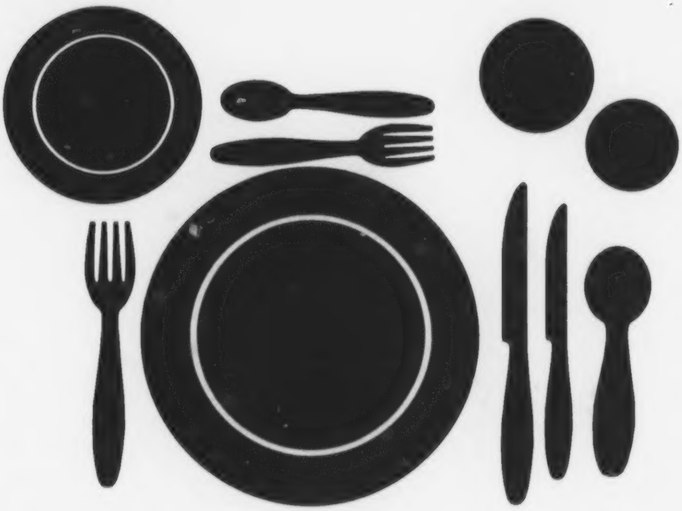
If the topic of business dress was not developed as a part of the nonverbal communication unit, then the teacher may want to address what constitutes appropriate business dress around the world as a part of this unit. One matter that could serve as a classroom debate topic is whether John Molloy's (1975; 1977) dress-for-success wardrobe guidelines are applicable for businesspersons around the world with minor variations. As a related project a teacher might ask students to assemble a collage of pictures of clothes and accessories that would be suitable to wear while engaged in international business-communication activities on a specified continent or in a certain country.

Greeting rituals and departing rituals of various business cultures should also be presented since how business interactions begin and end often influence the success or failure of business activities abroad. The teacher should focus attention on such important aspects as the greeting words; the greeting body language such as handshakes, bows, embraces, and kisses; the exchanging of business cards (if appropriate); the exchange of business gifts (if appropriate); the departing words; and the departing body language. Again, the teacher can use student contributions to augment his or her presentation. The teacher could have some students role play the described greeting and departing rituals, while other students observe and then offer constructive feedback about the appropriateness of the exhibited behaviors.

Most students have little or no experience with formal dining, especially in an international sense; consequently, the teacher may decide to incorporate this topic into the unit. One approach to table-related etiquette is for the teacher to start by reviewing the basics of formal dining in the U.S., perhaps with place-setting items as demonstration props. Next, he or she might progress from the American style to the Continental or European style, being careful to point out how that style of eating is like and unlike the American style. The teacher might demonstrate how food would be cut and eaten with the fork remaining in the left hand and how in some circumstances food can be placed on the back side of the fork tines. Then, the teacher--perhaps with assistance from students from Oriental cultures--could discuss and demonstrate eating with chopsticks and proper chopstick etiquette. Finally, the teacher might discuss and demonstrate eating with the hands as it is often done in the Arabic Middle East and in some parts of Africa.

The fragmented topics comprising sociobusiness skills can be unified in a culminating international business-meal function, where students have opportunities to apply what they have studied in a nonthreatening environment. As representatives of assigned countries, the students plan an appropriate meal function and prepare representative foods from their respective countries. When they arrive at the international business-meal function, they role play appropriately dressed businesspersons from their countries, practicing the sanctioned greeting rituals. As foods are sampled, a representative of that

Figure 16
Consider Table Etiquette as One Important Sociobusiness Dimension



You should consider exposing learners to a wide variety of place settings and eating styles.

country describes its foods, explains why they are representative, and tells how they should be eaten. Representatives of that country and the teacher demonstrate proper table etiquette when consuming those foods, and others model their behaviors. In the process of consuming foods, students eat American style, Continental style, Oriental style, and Middle Eastern/African style. Throughout the meal function the students converse about culturally sanctioned topics. At the end of the international business-meal function, the students practice their leave-taking rituals with representatives of other cultures.

In some cases, the teacher may be able to help defray some or all of the students' costs associated with the preparation of the representative foods, which in this case are important learning materials. For additional information about this type of unit and related interaction, see Scott (1995a; 1995c).

Temporal conception. The purpose of a unit about temporal conception (time) in an international business communication-related course is to make students aware of the ways in which time influences international business communication. As part of the silent language of international business (see Hall, 1960), perceptions of time influence when and at what rate representatives of various cultures engage in international business activities, including communicative activities. Understanding and accommodating differences in temporal conception smooths the way for harmonious international business communication.

Figure 17
Comprehend Time as a Communication Medium

You should accept the fact that time is an important medium of business communication around the world.

The teacher of an international business communication-related course can develop this unit by establishing that time is a medium of communication, a means of communication that on the surface appears to be straightforward but in actuality is not. An article such as Boslough's (1990) "The Enigma of Time" can add other interesting and complementary ideas about time. Before addressing such topics as polychronic (accepting multiple tasks at a time) and monochronic (accepting one task at a time) orientations, the teacher should ensure that students understand that individuals, subcultures, and cultures can sometimes have--but do not necessarily have--very different perceptions of time. For example, the general U.S. culture places considerable value on clock or mechanical time, but its Navajo subculture does not, acknowledging natural or seasonal time relating to its historic agrarian way of life. Although the U.S. business subculture views time as a scarce and valuable resource that is carefully allocated and scheduled, a minority of businesspersons are insensitive to time constraints and habitually late in fulfilling commitments.

A teacher can also focus attention on selecting an appropriate clock time for engaging in international business-communication activities such as placing telephone calls, sending faxes, and expecting related responses. He or she can do so by teaching students about the international time system and how to calculate local times around the world when the time in another location is known. This can be followed by related application activities, including the calculation of local times in various cities around the world. An interesting related aspect the teacher might explore with students is the communication-related ramifications of choosing a specified city as a multinational or regional headquarters site.

A teacher could close a time-related unit by focusing attention on how differences in time perceptions among cultures can be bridged. He or she might suggest strategies or have the students develop and share strategies, using individual, small-group, or large-group processes. Since the strategies may out of necessity be purposefully vague, the teacher may want to use student-generated examples to suggest their possible application, especially for the benefit of concrete-minded students.

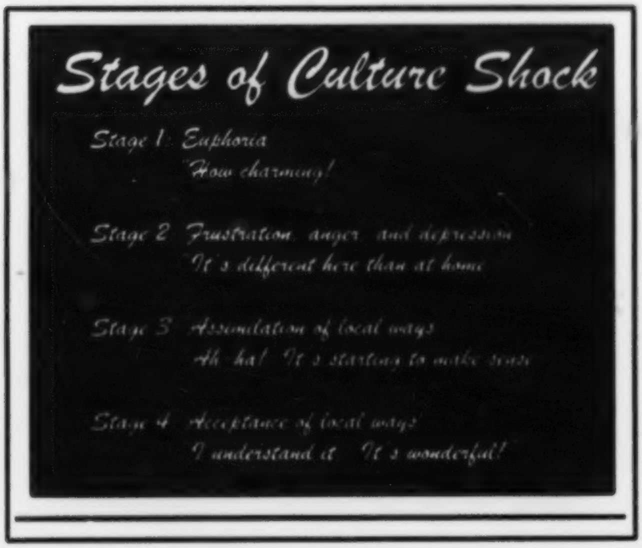
Culture shock and reverse culture shock. The purpose of a unit about culture shock and reverse culture shock in an international business communication-related course is to make students aware that they will experience the phenomenon of culture shock when moving abroad to live and to work and the phenomenon of reverse culture shock when they return home after having lived and worked abroad. Culture shock is the normal adjustment process that an individual experiences when he or she leaves the native culture and enters another culture. After an initial period of euphoria, the individual becomes frustrated, angry, and depressed because of all of the challenging cultural differences. Over time he or she begins to assimilate the ways of the new culture. If he or she remains long enough in the new cultural environment, acceptance of its ways can occur. Reverse culture shock is a similar normal adjustment process that occurs when a person leaves an adopted culture that has been assimilated and accepted and reenters his or her native culture. Since that individual has changed in many ways because of experiences abroad, he or she must readjust to the native culture.

The teacher of an international business communication-related course will probably begin this unit by defining and explaining culture shock, perhaps incorporating not only personal experiences with culture shock but also the experiences of students who have gone abroad for an extended period of time. When doing so, the teacher should emphasize that culture shock is a normal human reaction. Especially if the teacher and students have limited firsthand experiences with culture shock, the teacher might show the film "Beyond Culture Shock" (1983) or invite a guest speaker with significant international experiences to share the frustrations and joys of adjusting to life in another culture. Either of these approaches should add meaning to the idea of culture shock.

The teacher should also develop the concept of reverse culture shock, again being careful to point out that it is a normal human reaction to reintegration with the native culture after having been changed by assimilation of another culture. Explaining why such common negative reactions to the excesses of the U.S. culture, such as too much light, too much control over temperatures, too much

Figure 18

Understand the Phenomenon of Culture Shock



Stages of Culture Shock

Stage 1: Euphoria
"How charming!"

Stage 2: Frustration, anger, and depression
"It's different here than at home"

Stage 3: Assimilation of local ways
"Ah ha! It's starting to make sense"

Stage 4: Acceptance of local ways
"I understand it. It's wonderful!"

You should realize that the four phases of culture shock are part of the normal process of adjustment to a new culture.

noise, too many activities, and too many choices, are reasonable reactions for returning natives given their recent experiences abroad and insightful for some students. A teacher could follow with a film about reverse culture shock, such as "Welcome Home, Stranger" (1983), or with a guest speaker who frankly discusses some of the problems associated with reentry into the U.S. culture after having lived abroad.

A teacher can conclude a unit about culture shock and reverse culture shock with the formulation of strategies for minimizing the negative effects of each phenomenon. He or she might divide the class into two groups, with one addressing culture shock and one addressing reverse culture shock. In large-group format the groups can share, evaluate, and refine their strategies, better preparing themselves for future encounters with culture shock and reverse culture shock in the process.

Country-specific applications. The purpose of a unit of country-specific applications in an international business communication-related course is to reinforce how major dimensions of international business communication are manifested in selected countries around the world. The planned, purposeful

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repetition of major course themes with cross-cultural applications helps students to realize the profound influence of cultural variables on international business communication. Further, it helps students to understand better that those themes can be generalized to various cultures to improve international business communication.

At the beginning of the course, the teacher can have the students select five or six diverse countries that are spread around the globe and that have differing types and levels of economic development. Then the teacher can divide the students into small groups that research how the course topics relate to business communication in one of the focus countries, using both people and library resources.

To direct the students during their independent investigation, the teacher can prepare guidelines that suggest the broad types of information that are needed for the related oral presentation, which is given at or near the end of the course. Among those guidelines are country-specific information about general characteristics of the country, major factors influencing its business-communication systems, characteristics of effective business communication, and guidelines for shaping the interactive behaviors of nonnatives so that they can successfully engage in international business communication with natives.

Depending on the maturity of the students, the teacher will provide either a detailed or vague structure for the related presentations. The teacher should encourage students to use their creativity, ingenuity, and resourcefulness as they

Figure 19
Reinforce Major Content Dimensions with Country-Specific Applications

You should consider the reinforcement value of applying important dimensions of international business communication in the contexts of specific countries.

search for relevant information and develop their related presentations. To help students make effective use of local library resources, the teacher should ask a librarian to give a presentation and demonstration about retrieving needed international business communication-related information. Periodically the teacher should get progress reports from the small groups to ensure that they are on task and experiencing no major difficulties in securing necessary information.

At the teacher-selected time, each group makes its country-specific presentation, complying with the specifications that have been set by the teacher. Further, it addresses related questions from other students. In effect, group members serve as international business-communication consultants, preparing others for effective international business communication with natives of specific countries.

At the discretion of the teacher, several other elements can be added to this cumulative activity. To document library research, groups could be required to prepare related bibliographies or reference lists. To reinforce important presentation points, groups could be required to prepare related handouts for others interested in communicating for business purposes in their respective countries. To demonstrate proficiency in the application of written business-communication principles, groups could be required to prepare related documents such as term papers.

Figure 20
Evaluate Course Content Periodically

You should periodically review the topics that you incorporate into your international business-communication course to be certain that they reflect generally accepted content.

Evaluating Course Content and Instructional Activities

A teacher of an international business communication-related course will need to evaluate both the course content and the selected instructional activities.

Course content. Periodically a teacher will need to evaluate the appropriateness of the content of the offered international business communication-related course. A consensus appears to be forming regarding the primary course content (see Martin (1991) and Scott and Green (1995). An analysis of the major topics addressed in the existing international business communication-related textbooks suggests that a core content nucleus exists in spite of differing instructional orientations. By selecting most of the course topics from this core content nucleus, which is reflected in the topics suggested in this publication, a teacher can be reasonably certain that he or she is exposing students to important dimensions of international business communication. By reading the related literature on a regular basis, a teacher can become aware of changing thought about what constitutes appropriate international business-communication course content. Research by Green and Scott (in press) and Scott and Green (in press), for example, documents the nature of emerging international business-communication courses in colleges and schools of business accredited by the American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) circa 1994. Over time this exploratory status study will be complemented by other studies that shed light on international business-communication courses at a variety of instructional levels and within a variety of types of educational institutions. Teachers of international business communication-related courses can rely on such valid and reliable research studies for information about mainstream international business-communication course practices.

Instructional activities. A teacher of an international business communication-related course will need to use a variety of means for evaluating student performance, means that are tailored to the types of selected instructional activities. This subsection provides general evaluative guidance that relates to common types of instructional activities that are incorporated into international business communication-related courses.

When evaluating general participation and discussion, a teacher might consider several factors, including the preparedness of the students to provide meaningful class contributions, the organization and quality of the expressed ideas, and the relative frequency of contributions, keeping in mind that students with some personality types are more likely to engage actively in large-group discussions than others. When students are asked to formulate specified outputs such as guidelines or principles, a teacher might also consider the breadth, depth, and completeness of offered answers.

A teacher might consider several factors when evaluating role playing and simulation activities. For example, he or she might assess the degree to which the student willingly fulfilled his or her assigned part in compliance with the specified guidelines. A teacher should also assess the degree to which the student benefited through participation in the role playing or simulation activity. By asking a series of detailed debriefing questions about what happened to students during the activity, what students perceive as relevant analogies and learning points, and what steps toward application can be taken as a result of the activity, a teacher can assess student development from experiential activities.

A teacher of an international business communication-related course can assess reports prepared by students on several bases. One important basis involves the content. Is the content accurate, complete, current, and compatible with the assignment specifications? Another important basis involves the presentation of the content. Is the information presented in a professional manner that complies with the generally accepted standards for either written or oral presentations?

When evaluating responses to case problems, a teacher of an international business communication-related course might consider the breadth and depth of preparation and presentation, including such dimensions as the appropriateness of the case summary, the identification of the case problems(s), the adequacy of the identified alternatives, the persuasiveness of the arguments marshaled in support of the most viable alternative, and the like. If the case is presented in oral format, then he or she will also need to consider relevant dimensions of oral communication; if the case is presented in written format, the teacher will also need to consider relevant dimensions of written communication.

Sometimes a teacher of an international business communication-related course may want to assess if students are completing assigned readings prior to related classroom activities. He or she can do so by occasionally giving announced or unannounced quizzes that relate to assigned course readings. Such quizzes could have objective, short answer, and/or essay formats and might relate to fact, vocabulary, and/or inference matters.

When a teacher of an international business communication-related course has students gather research information either firsthand via interviews or questionnaires or secondhand through library sources, he or she will need to employ different evaluation strategies. In some cases being able to acquire all of the desired information may not be under the control of the student. For example, finding a knowledgeable person who is willing to be interviewed can sometimes be challenging, as can using a library that has a modest collection of international business communication-related resources. A teacher must realize that in spite of a good-faith attempt by the student to uncover the needed information, he or she may not always be able to do so, especially if the time frame is short. Consequently, a teacher may want to consider the appropriateness of the approach used by the student to gather the needed information, as well as the quality and quantity of gathered information. The degree to which the student can gather the needed information with a minimal amount of guidance from the teacher and from other resource persons, such as reference librarians, is a potential assessment factor, especially for students enrolled in courses offered at the graduate level.

A teacher of an international business communication-related course may occasionally ask students to complete self-assessment instruments, especially when he or she wants students to focus attention on how certain topics relate to them personally. Since responses on self-assessment activities vary considerably by individual, a teacher may have to be satisfied that students have made a good-faith attempt to complete the activity. If the self-assessment activity includes the preparation of a related plan of action, then the teacher could consider if that plan appears to be reasonable and prudent given student performance on the self-assessment activity.

When a teacher incorporates guest speakers into the instruction, the teacher can assess the degree to which a student listens attentively and asks intelligent questions. Since guest-speaker presentations are often followed by classwide discussion sessions, the teacher might also consider active participation in that discussion as a sign that a student has benefited from the information shared by a guest speaker.

A teacher of an international business-communication course will want to administer examinations of varying formats throughout the course. Using both objective and essay formats gives students with differing characteristics opportunities to demonstrate their course-related knowledges, skills, and attitudes to the best possible advantage. When formulating objective test items, a teacher should strive for fact, vocabulary, and inference items that range from very easy to very difficult, with most items being in the middle of the range. Also, care should be taken to minimize ambiguous wordings and tricky items. Essay items should focus attention on important concepts or applications; the items could require the student to recall and explain a fact, to synthesize information about a topic, or to take and defend a position on an issue. A teacher might require students to address certain essay items but give them some choice on other essay items.

The Infusion Approach

Another approach to internationalizing business communication is to implement the infusion approach.

Understanding the Infusion Approach

The infusion approach involves the addition of international business communication-related content to existing courses in other areas of study. When the infusion approach is implemented, selected content, not the entire content of one or more specialized international business communication-related courses, is typically incorporated into other courses wherever it is perceived to be relevant and feasible to add.

One advantage of the infusion approach is that it is simple to implement. As a teacher's knowledges, skills, and attitudes about international business communication develop, he or she can incorporate that information wherever it is relevant in other courses being taught. The infusion approach allows a teacher to modify the course content gradually without going through the sometimes cumbersome curriculum-approval process. Further, since the infusion approach does not cause a new course to be created, it does not require new staff nor disrupt the existing teaching schedule and related room allocations. In addition, the infusion approach allows all departmental members to participate equitably in the internationalization of the curriculum, not just the ones teaching specialized internationalized courses. From an administrative viewpoint the infusion approach is both relatively easy and inexpensive to implement.

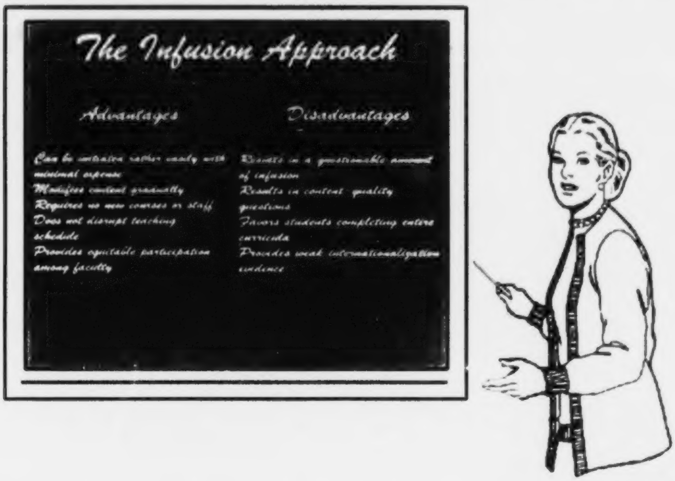
The amount and quality of the infused international business communication-related content are primary concerns about the infusion approach. What mechanism guarantees that all departmental members are consistently infusing relevant international business-communication content throughout their courses in a coordinated manner? What ensures that each and every teacher is fulfilling his or her infusion obligations to the best of his or her ability? What ensures that learners are not overexposed to some relevant international dimensions of business communication and underexposed to others? What ensures that students who sample from business-education courses rather than complete a multi-year sequence of related courses receive sufficient international business communication-related content?

Another concern is the strength of the evidence that the business-education curriculum is in fact internationalized when the infusion approach is used. Members of the business community, the accreditation groups, and the public might find the evidence that substantiates the internationalization effort via infusion to be less compelling, substantive, and convincing than when one or more specialized international business communication-related courses are offered.

Implementing the Infusion Approach

Assuming that a decision to implement the infusion approach is made, how might this be accomplished? How can relevant dimensions of international business communication be infused throughout the business-education curriculum in an effective manner?

Figure 21
Consider the Advantages and Disadvantages of the Infusion Approach


The Infusion Approach
Advantages
Disadvantages
Can be initiated rather easily with minimal expense
Modifies content gradually
Requires no new courses or staff
Does not disrupt teaching schedule
Provides equitable participation among faculty
Results in a questionable amount of infusion
Results in content quality questions
Favors students completing entire curricula
Provides weak internationalization evidence

You should carefully weigh the advantages and disadvantages of the infusion approach.

If the infusion approach is to be successful, it is critical that individual teachers coordinate their infusion efforts with those of their colleagues to ensure that the needs of students who sample and who complete multi-year course sequences are adequately addressed. Further, each teacher must be committed to infusing international content on a regular basis according to the departmentwide plan.

In consultation with colleagues, the department chair or a delegated teacher might head a committee that explores ways in which relevant dimensions of international business communication can be infused into every departmental course offering. That group should explore the relevant literature and available instructional resources for ideas much like those implementing the separate-course approach would do. Further, they should use their creativity to invent and

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to develop new infusion ideas. In time those ideas from various sources can be converted into a departmentwide infusion plan and implemented by various teachers.

Figure 22
Create a Departmentwide Infusion Plan

You and your colleagues should devise a detailed departmentwide plan that coordinates your infusion efforts.

Given the magnitude of the infusion task, it is likely that the departmental committee will need to develop a detailed multi-year plan that gradually incorporates more and more international business-communication content throughout the entire curriculum. Although the overall goals of the infusion approach as reflected in the departmentwide plan will parallel those of the separate-course approach, those goals for the infusion approach will probably be more generalized and less specific than those of the separate-course approach. Infusion-approach goals are apt to be accomplished over a longer time period than separate-course approach goals.

Teachers will need time to plan for and to develop the necessary international business communication-related knowledges, skills, and attitudes through a variety of means, including course enrollment and self-directed study. They will also need time to ponder how they can infuse the designated international business-communication dimensions into the assigned courses. Further, they will need time to experiment with various ways of incorporating relevant content, refining their infusion strategies in the process.

Periodically teachers should monitor the effectiveness of their infusion efforts. They should verify that the needs of their students for relevant international business-communication content are being met in conformity with the expectations of such key constituent groups as the parents, the public, the business community, and the accreditation groups. Teachers should ensure that both the breadth and depth of coverage of international topics are appropriate and in conformity with mainstream thinking and related standards. Further, teachers should ensure that individually and collectively they are, in fact, providing sufficient international business communication-related content in compliance with the departmentwide infusion plan. As may be appropriate, teachers should alter their individual and collective infusion efforts, as well as their related departmentwide infusion plan.

Infusing International Business Communication into Various Courses

Relevant international business communication-related content can be added to every business-education course offering. Many opportunities for infusing international business communication-related content exist, but sometimes teachers do not readily envision the connecting points. Much of the content infused into business-education course offerings will be similar to that incorporated into specialized international business-communication courses, but in some cases that content may be developed in different ways and to lesser degrees than when the separate-course approach is used. Nevertheless, those who choose to infuse international business-communication content into other courses may want to review the suggested topics and teaching ideas found in the separate-course section of this document to stimulate their thinking processes.

Other instructional ideas, grouped by broad--and occasionally overlapping--types of subject matter, follow. Each of these related subsections suggests why international business communication-related content should be infused with traditional subject-matter content; describes one or more related instructional activities in general terms to facilitate its adaptation to specific instructional environments; and incorporates brief evaluative guidance. These instructional ideas represent a starting point designed to stimulate creative thinking and adaptation, not the final word. A number of the international business-communication infusion-related subsections have been contributed by knowledgeable members of Delta Pi Epsilon, who are acknowledged at the ends of their respective subsections; unacknowledged subsections were prepared by the primary author of this document.

Accounting-related courses. In accounting-related courses a teacher should make students aware that accounting differs from country to country. Just as cultural variables significantly influence the nature of business communication around the world, so, too, do cultural variables influence the nature of accounting around the world. In an abstract sense an accounting system is a country-specific type of business-communication system that reflects the financial data-related beliefs, values, and assumptions of the dominant business subculture.

Figure 23
Realize That Accounting Systems Communicate Data Differently Around the World

You should realize that accounting systems are specialized country-specific business-communication systems for financial data.

Accounting students--especially advanced ones--need to understand that accounting-related systems, standards, and preferences are not universal. As a result, an accounting teacher ought to provide information via lecture and discussion about why various countries have different accounting systems, standards, and preferences. For example, he or she might query students about the relative importance of the common financial statements before explaining that in the U.S. the income-statement information is typically valued more than the balance-sheet information. Next the teacher might ask the students to speculate why this is so. Via the resulting student and teacher contributions, those present ought to realize that this cultural preference is at least partially attributable to the facts that publicly-held corporations dominate in the U.S. business sector and that the wealth of shareholders is largely determined by stock prices, which are sensitive to earnings per share.

After the accounting teacher explains that the predominate cultural preferences within most Asian, Latin American, and European countries cause their citizens to value the balance-sheet information over the income-statement information, he or she might ask students to speculate why this might be so. Through directed questioning and discussion, the teacher can encourage students to realize that in these countries ownership of wealth is perceived to be more important than current income and that owners are primarily interested in the assets and the claims against those assets.

By examining and discussing financial statements from selected countries around the world, an accounting teacher can also focus attention on several international language-related dimensions of accounting. With transparencies he or she could illustrate that financial statements are prepared in a number of different languages--typically either the dominant language of the country in which the business is headquartered or one or more major languages of international business. That teacher could also point out that technical accounting terminology varies from country to country. A French-based company, for example, will use *bilan* in place of balance sheet; *actif* in place of assets; and *passif* in place of liabilities and equity. He or she could also use the account form of a French balance sheet to illustrate cultural preferences for the ordering of the communicated information; on that financial statement fixed assets precede other major categories of assets and capital and reserve items precede indebtedness items, which represent deviations from the customary order of those items in the U.S.

Through lecture and discussion, an accounting teacher could also focus attention on the types and amounts of disclosed information on the financial statements. Financial statements from some countries communicate detailed information about the accounting procedures used to calculate reported amounts; others do not, assuming that it is the responsibility of the international reader to be knowledgeable about the implemented accounting procedures, which could--and probably would--deviate from those used in the reader's native country.

An accounting teacher could also point out that efforts toward harmonization (uniformity) of financial statements worldwide contribute toward better international communication of financial information. In other words, harmonization leads toward more consistent interpretation of financial data from country to country. At this point the teacher might ask students to speculate about reasons why it is unlikely that total worldwide harmonization of accounting standards will ever occur. The ensuing discussion could focus on such factors as profound cultural differences, nationalism, egotism, and pride, all of which are impediments to the worldwide harmonization of accounting and to global interpretation of financial statements.

For related follow-up activities, an accounting teacher might ask students to acquire non-American--preferably non-English language--accounting statements through such means as communication with the headquarters staffs of foreign-based businesses; communication with the consulate staffs of foreign governments, who foster business relationships; and library research, especially in international accounting textbooks and journals. Selected students who possess advanced foreign-language skills might translate those financial statements, consulting foreign-language dictionaries and teachers as necessary, before the accounting teacher incorporates the statements into other classroom discussions about international dimensions of accounting. Also, the gathered financial statements could serve as source documents and as illustrations for written and/or oral reports about similarities and differences in accounting around the world. They could serve as an interesting classroom display or as the primary components of a bulletin board, too.

An accounting teacher might evaluate several dimensions of the suggested activities, including active participation in the discussion that accompanies the teacher's lecture about selected international dimensions of accounting; effort expended to acquire financial statements prepared outside the U.S., realizing that not all sincere, good-faith attempts will yield suitable financial statements; effort expended to translate financial statements prepared in languages other than English, realizing that the translation of some technical accounting terminology can be challenging--perhaps even impossible if equivalent concepts do not exist in both languages; conformity with generally accepted standards for written and/or oral reports; and other factors the teacher perceives to be relevant.

Basic business and economics-related courses. Introductory basic business and economics courses often include a survey of the U.S. business subculture with an emphasis on the free-enterprise system. Students should also have an awareness of other economic systems and changing worldwide economic order. One approach to achieving this goal is to have students learn about the underlying beliefs, values, and assumptions and the communication-related dimensions that are reflected in the economic systems of various countries.

Traditionally economic systems have been narrowly defined as being capitalistic, socialistic, or communistic. While this classification system identifies a limited number of characteristics such as ownership or means of production, it does not recognize that modern systems often contain elements of two or more traditional economic systems. In contrast, a modern approach to defining economic systems considers the total organization of the system, including the "institutions, organizations, laws and rules, traditions, beliefs, attitudes, values, taboos, and the resulting behavior patterns that directly or indirectly affect economic behavior and outcomes" (Pryor, 1973, p. 337).

Gregory and Stuart (1995) suggest classifying modern economic systems using broadly defined economic-system variants: (a) levels of decision-making (centralized, decentralized, or mixed); (b) information mechanisms (market, planned, or mixed); (c) ownership arrangements (private, public, or mixed); and (d) incentive arrangements (monetary, moral, or mixed) designed to motivate system participants (households, governments, and businesses).

Modifying the grid structure developed by Gregory and Stuart (1995) and shown in the partially completed Table 1, the teacher could provide examples of modern economic systems as defined by these economic-system variants. The teacher could then explain that decisions regarding economic-system variants are largely based on the beliefs, values, and assumptions and the related communication patterns of the system participants. Changes in any or all of these economic-system variants would be reflected in changes in the political climate and economic system of the country.

Once the variants of modern economic systems have been introduced, the teacher could divide the students into groups, assigning each group a different country to research. With librarian assistance students could collect information about the economic-system variants within the economy of a particular country. Using the suggested grid structure to organize the information, students could classify the economic system and list examples of its components. This activity would introduce the students to the fundamental concepts of modern economic systems and the formal language used to describe them.

The teacher could evaluate the active and cooperative participation among group members while completing the grid; the quality and depth of information collected about the economic-system variants; the accuracy of the system classification; and other factors emphasized by the teacher.

To help students understand that the variant choices are reflections of underlying cultural beliefs, values, and assumptions and communication-related dimensions, the teacher could introduce an activity that elucidates economic-system variants within different cultures. Sayings such as proverbs, aphorisms, and maxims explain essential truths as defined by a specific culture and provide advice and instruction regarding acceptable behavior within that culture. Proverbs, aphorisms, and maxims are found in all languages, but they often relate the same basic truths in widely divergent ways. The teacher could have students develop a list of proverbs, aphorisms, and maxims that relate to the economic-system variants identified for one or more countries listed in the fully completed version of Table 1. The students could describe how the sayings reflect the underlying beliefs, values, and assumptions and communication-related dimensions that support the economic-system variants.

For example, a group might suggest that the proverb "Time is money" reflects the beliefs, values, and assumptions underlying the information, decision-making, and incentive mechanisms in a capitalistic system. This proverb illustrates fundamental differences between two countries, one with a capitalistic economic system and one with a market socialistic economic system. Cross-cultural comparisons about the meaning of time among various countries could focus attention on such matters as the measurement of productivity by time, separation of work time and personal time, flexibility in the use of time, and the relative importance of scheduling by time. Advanced students could also research and report the history of one or more of the proverbs, aphorisms, or maxims.

The teacher could evaluate the active and cooperative participation among group members while compiling the list of sayings; the descriptions relating the sayings to the economic systems; the accuracy and depth of interpretation of the sayings; and the contrasts of the beliefs, values, and assumptions and related communication dimensions across cultures and economic systems.

Table 1
Models of Contemporary Economic Systems

System	Capitalism		Market Socialism		Planned Socialism	
Variants	General Characteristics	Specific Characteristics of **the United States**	General Characteristics	Specific Characteristics of ________	General Characteristics	Specific Characteristics of ________
Decision-Making Structure	Primarily Decentralized	**Individual freedoms of choice, including those of** **-consumption** **-enterprise** **-occupation**	Primarily Decentralized		Primarily Centralized	
Mechanisms for Information and Coordination	Primarily Market	**Institutional organizations such as** **-banks** **-stock exchanges** **-unions** **-governmental regulatory agencies** **-taxation agencies** **-retail and wholesale outlets** **-advertising media**	Primarily Market		Primarily Plan	

Property Rights	Primarily Private Ownership	**Legally defined property rights, including** **-sole proprietorships** **-partnerships** **-corporations** **-cooperatives**	State and/or Collective Ownership		Primarily State Ownership	
Incentives	Primarily Market	**Primarily material incentives, including** **-wages** **-dividends** **-interest**	Material and Moral		Material and Moral	

Note. Examples of student responses are shown in boldface type.

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As a culminating activity the teacher could have the students give group oral presentations that summarize the basic components of selected economic systems and the beliefs, values, and assumptions of their related business subcultures.

The teacher could evaluate the oral presentations on the active and cooperative participation among group members; the organization of information; the use of appropriate communication skills; and the overall quality and quantity of the information.

Business Law students may want to compare and contrast the legal system of the U.S. with that of other countries. The Lexis portion of the Lexis-Nexis online system provides detailed information about the legal environments in the U.S. and other countries. Comparing and contrasting laws of the U.S. and those of other countries may be of interest to students.

The teacher could assign the students the task of researching if--and perhaps how--a legal concept in the U.S. exists in another country. Using available electronic and print resources, the students could research a legal concept and create vignettes to portray how the concept is applied in both countries. The vignettes should be written in such a way that the similarities and differences will be apparent.

For example, Canadian law does not require Miranda rights to be read to an individual during his or her arrest. Related vignettes would depict the arrested subject being cautioned about his or her legal rights and responsibilities in the U.S. but not being cautioned about his or her legal rights and responsibilities in Canada. Selected students could read their vignettes to the class and ask their classmates to point out the similarities and differences in the involved legal concepts.

The teacher could evaluate the creativity and accuracy of the vignettes devised by selected students, including the incorporation of the legal concepts, and the accuracy of the supporting explanations of the underlying legal concepts given by responding students.

In light of the recent passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), students could research via the Lexis-Nexis online system conflicts in contract laws among the three participating countries. For example, in Mexico a spoken contract can be as legally binding as a written contact. Students might be asked to answer the following questions. Why is it important to understand how the culture of a country influences its laws? What is the process for resolving a contractual conflict that involves business organizations located in two or more countries? These questions could lead to a discussion about the value of developing uniform laws and regulations for governing trade among countries and the difficulties of doing so because of differences in such factors as culture and language, which affect the trading practices of each country.

The teacher might continue the trading-bloc theme by explaining how European Union laws and regulations standardize trading practices among participating countries. In doing so, he or she should briefly discuss the four major organizational bodies within the European Union, the Commission, the Council, the European Parliament, and the Court of Justice.

The teacher could then divide the class into seven groups, with three of the groups representing participating NAFTA countries and the other four groups representing the primary institutions of the European Union. Each NAFTA country-group could be asked to research the trading laws of its business community and to write a one-page persuasive essay defending why its laws should be adopted as the NAFTA standard. Each European Union group could be asked to research the duties and responsibilities of one of the four European Union institutions and to write a one-page persuasive essay describing the contributions of that institution.

Once the students have developed their persuasive arguments, the teacher could moderate a panel discussion in which the groups present their cases. The teacher-moderator could then lead a summarizing discussion prior to a student vote on the ideal trading-practice structure for the NAFTA trading bloc.

The teacher might evaluate the organization, logic, and accuracy of the essays and oral comments and the expended effort on individual and group bases.

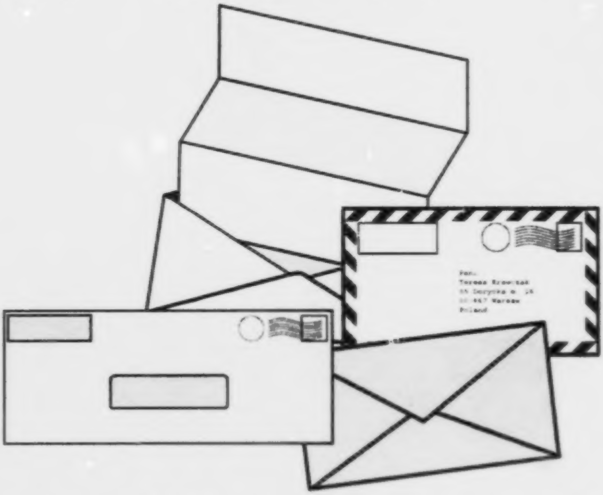
(The preceding subsection was contributed by Kimberlee Bartel.)

Business communication-related courses. Since a comprehensive business-communication course would include both written- and oral-communication components, a teacher can infuse international business-communication concepts into both components. When doing so, a teacher should make students aware that written, oral, and nonverbal business communications vary from country to country. He or she ought to provide information via lecture, discussion, and other instructional approaches about various countries and how their sociocultural differences impact written, verbal, and nonverbal business communications.

For example, a teacher might query the students about the relative importance of language sensitivity in business communication in the U.S. before discussing the matter in other countries. Next the teacher could ask students about their perceptions about gesturing and its importance in business communication at home and abroad. The resulting teacher and student interactions should heighten the awareness of students that all types of business communications are influenced by sociocultural factors.

To infuse international business-communication concepts into written communications, a teacher could present some general guidelines for international business communication, emphasizing that among other things students should strive for clarity; use short, precise words; write concisely; and avoid slang and idiomatic expressions. Discussion of these and other guidelines could reveal relevant experiences of students in multicultural or multilingual situations. The discussion could be followed by an exercise about written expression, one that emphasizes the differences between linguistic equivalence (where an idea can be converted into an equivalent expression in another language) and linguistic determinism (where one language can better describe an idea than another language).

Figure 24
Remember That Sociocultural Differences Impact Written International Business Communications



You should remember that sociocultural factors come into play every time that you write an international business communication.

Either as an out-of-class or in-class assignment, the teacher could ask student teams (a) to compile a listing of six common business expressions that fit into the category of slang and idiomatic expressions (bottom line, for example); (b) to make up nontranslatable expressions for four of the slang and idiomatic expressions (wher could mean bottom line, for example); (c) to compile a listing of five or more business-related activities that are logically related (to receive, open, read, input, and verify a purchase order, for example); (d) to make up nontranslatable expressions for three of the business activities (glinging could mean to verify a purchase order, for example); and (e) to compose a business letter or memorandum that incorporates the items generated in the preceding steps, being sure to use all of the nontranslatable expressions, not the regular expressions.

During class the teacher could have the teams exchange their written communications and evaluate them against the presented guidelines. Related discussion could focus around the wording, the clarity of the message, and how the uncertainty about the meanings of certain expressions negatively impacted the effectiveness of the communication from the perspectives of readers who were unfamiliar with those expressions. The teacher should also point out that the use of ineffective wording can have a similar deleterious effect in oral business communications at home and abroad.

To focus attention on understanding body language around the world, the teacher might query students about their perceptions of different examples of body language in the U.S., giving special emphasis to body language that communicates respect and disrespect. After dividing the class into teams representing four major countries around the world, the teacher could ask the teams to list secretly common examples of body language, some of which show respect or disrespect. The teacher could then share the merged lists with all teams but should not identify the sources of individual items. Next the teacher could either provide students with reference materials about body language around the world or could send the students to the library to research that topic. After a suitable research period, the teams could role play a business meeting involving unfamiliar representatives from the four countries. While the team members should be generally familiar with how representatives from their assigned countries would react to certain examples of body language, they would not have comparable information for the other three countries. All participants would try to react to various displays of body language in ways that would be inoffensive to representatives from other countries.

For example, the four teams could represent such diverse countries as New Zealand, Argentina, Russia, and Japan. To begin the role play, the students could greet members from the other groups with a nonverbal greeting used in their own countries. The New Zealand group members could perform the traditional greeting of rubbing noses practiced by the Maori tribespeople. The Russian group members might approach the members of other groups with Russian bear hugs followed by two quick kisses to alternate cheeks. The Argentina group members could extend warm handshakes and embraces, while the Japanese group might politely bow after shaking hands. After finishing their greeting rituals, the four teams could continue by role playing their business meeting.

Related discussion of the role-play exercise might focus around specific examples of body language that representatives from certain countries found offensive, how representatives from other countries reacted, and how those reactions affected offended and nonoffended individuals.

Quantitative evaluation of both exercises could be based on the measurement of the appropriateness of the created business communications, as well as the creative use of wording in the written documents. Team participation could be measured on the bases of attendance and active participation. Although difficult for the teacher to measure, he or she should pay attention to the degree of student involvement during the various components of the instructional activities.

Qualitative evaluation of the effectiveness of the exercises would focus on the appreciation that students develop of the potentially serious consequences of ineffective use of language, as well as inappropriate use of body language. The resulting sensitivity would ideally be expressed by students during the final discussion of the exercises. Because the exercises call upon the students to think creatively, their originality and means of delivery could also be considered in the evaluation.

To confirm the relevance of the exercises, the teacher might ask the students to describe the implemented written, verbal, and nonverbal expressions; to share their reactions to the expressions; and to relate the exercises to the concepts presented in the business-communication course.

(The preceding subsection was contributed by D. J. Christian.)

Computer literacy-related courses. Computer literacy is popularly defined as the ability to understand and to use computers. Information literacy is defined as the ability to find, analyze, and use information. The prevalence of computers has expanded the traditional definition of literacy--the ability to read and write--to include newer tools of communication. Because of such factors as the changing global economy and the Information Superhighway, students need exposure to and training in computer literacy and information literacy for international communication. A computer-literacy course can provide an opportunity for development of these skills.

In a typical secondary-school computer-literacy course, there will be students for whom English is a second language. One way of making them feel comfortable would be to include their input in a beginning lecture about computers. The teacher could ask them to share with the class the words used in their countries for computer. For example, in French that word is *ordinateur*. This simple exercise provides the teacher with an opportunity to generate positive acknowledgement of student participation, demonstrates an appreciation of cultural differences, and could easily lead to other exercises.

The teacher could assign a group research project focusing on computer pioneers around the world. Each group could make a five-minute oral presentation about its findings, with classmates taking notes and generating related test questions. The teacher could culminate the unit by incorporating some of the most well-written questions into the unit test.

A computer-literacy teacher might evaluate several dimensions of this activity, including the cooperative participation among group members, the breadth and depth of the reported information, the oral-presentation skills exhibited, and the quality and relevance of test questions.

Many students are interested in which computer system they should purchase. Since computers are manufactured around the world, finding information about U.S.- and foreign-made computers would be valuable to the students. For example, in the U.S. IBM, Hewlett Packard, Gateway, and Packard Bell are major computer manufacturers; in Japan, NEC; in Germany, Siemens. Because most of the international manufacturers also have U.S. subsidiaries, students can obtain information about these international computers by communicating with officials of these subsidiaries. A librarian could help students locate the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of these subsidiaries, facilitating communication with them for a variety of possible activities. While communicating with the companies, students could make arrangements for a classroom presentation about the computer networks used to communicate among international offices. At a more advanced level, students could, perhaps with librarian assistance, research the dominant written communication pattern used in the country of the parent company. Using this information, students could then write letters of inquiry directly to relevant officials in other countries.

Figure 25
Know That Computer Terminology Varies Around the World

You should realize that acknowledging cultural differences in computer terminology shows respect for other cultures.

Evaluation of student performance for this activity could include effort expended to communicate with company officials, realizing that not all sincere, good-faith attempts will yield responses; ability to research and conform to the dominant communication style for written and/or oral communication in another country; and other factors the teacher perceives to be relevant.

As a related activity students might research and write a report about the features of a particular computer model manufactured by an international company. The students could evaluate the chosen model based on criteria provided by the teacher at the beginning level and generated by the students at the advanced level. If students compared and contrasted multiple models, they could then make purchasing recommendations. These reports could be shared with interested parents as many of them have limited knowledge about computers. Results of this activity can generate favorable public relations at parent-teacher conferences, back-to-school nights, and student-organization open houses.

Evaluation of this activity might include the gathering, organizing, and preparing of the information; the quality of the gathered information; the complexity and sophistication of the analysis; and the validity of the purchase recommendation.

The ergonomics of computers is another topic of interest in a computer-literacy course. Ergonomics experts blame computer designers for failing to construct safe keyboards and monitors. Harmful effects related to computer design include carpal tunnel syndrome and electromagnetic radiation. For example, some studies have linked the latter to higher miscarriage rates. Because European countries have traditionally been leaders in the development and implementation of ergonomic standards and guidelines, this topic provides another opportunity for international business communication.

Teachers could have students create health-and-safety posters or collages that depict ergonomic design features around the world. These creative works could incorporate pictures of ergonomic design features clipped from catalogs, brochures, and related publications from foreign and domestic companies. This project could be complemented by having advanced students obtain actual copies of ergonomic guidelines and regulations used around the world for other communication-based activities.

The creative works could be evaluated based on the following criteria: visual attractiveness, relevance of message, creativity, and other factors identified by the teacher.

(The preceding subsection was contributed by Linda Prescott.)

Keyboarding-related courses. Because international communication is so pervasive, international business-communication concepts should be integrated into keyboarding courses. Good keyboarding textbooks usually include some exposure to international concepts through the typing of letters, reports, and timed writings about foreign countries, their cultures, or their business practices. These activities could also be complemented by introducing some brief international research projects into the keyboarding curriculum.

The teacher can have students keyboard tabulation exercises that contain information about a particular country. For example, as shown in Table 2, the teacher could share information about public and religious holidays celebrated in Iraq while teaching students how to set tabs. The teacher could divide this activity into three exercises. First, the teacher could have students create a simple two-column table using the information shown in Section A of Table 2. Second, the students could then modify the table by adding the information shown in Section B of Table 2 to form a more complex table. Third, the students could complete the table by adding a centered table title as shown in Section C of Table 2. For variation the teacher could have advanced students merge the information in Sections A and B by combining the columnar headings and typing the holidays in chronological order.

The teacher might evaluate this activity on the bases of the ability to follow directions and to employ generally accepted keyboarding standards for formatting, accuracy, and completeness.

Table 2
Tabulation Exercises About Iraq

C	HOLIDAYS CELEBRATED IN IRAQ	
A	**Public Holidays**	**Date**
	Arab League Day	March 22
	Labor Day	May 1
	Independence Day	May 25
	King Hussein's Accession	August 11
B	**Muslin Holidays**	**Date**
	Birthday of the Prophet Muhammad	January 30
	Ascension of the Prophet	June 11
	Eid al-Fitr--End of Ramandan	August 13
	Eid al-Adha--End of Pilgrimage	October 20
	Al-Hirja--The Muslin New Year	November 9

In a similar activity the teacher might have students research patriotic holidays that are celebrated in a particular region such as Central America. The students could then use their collected information to create a table similar to that shown in Table 3, the body of which is presented in accordance with the standards for the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, Fourth Edition (American Psychological Association, 1994).

Table 3
Independence Days Celebrated in Selected Central American Countries

Country	Date
Belize	January 1
Costa Rica	September 15
El Salvador	September 15
Guatemala	September 15
Honduras	September 15
Nicaragua	September 15
Panama	November 3

The teacher could evaluate this activity on the effort expended to research needed information, the ability to organize information appropriately, and the ability to apply generally accepted keyboarding standards.

The teacher could also have students create multiple-column tables that include information about a particular continent or region. For example, the teacher might have students research information about Southeast Asian countries such as Malaysia, the Philippines, Vietnam, Thailand, and Indonesia. The table could include columns for the country name, its capital city, its major languages, and its current population.

The teacher could evaluate this activity based on the quantity and the quality of collected information, the formatting of the table, and the overall quality of keyboarding.

To make students aware of the variety of major languages that are used for international business communication, the teacher could have students create tables that include common courtesy expressions in various languages. Table 4 shows one possible table format.

The teacher could use this activity to teach special characters such as those used in the French expression *s'il vous plaît* or the Spanish expression *adiós*. The teacher might also use this activity for teaching the importance of careful proofreading. The teacher could have students work in pairs to proofread and evaluate each other's table for accuracy and completeness.

Table 4
Common Courtesy Expressions in Selected Languages

Language	Common Courtesy Expressions				
English	Please	Thank you	Yes	No	Goodbye
Chinese	Qing	Xie xie nin	Shi	Bu	Zai jian
French	S'il vous plaît	Merci (beaucoup)	Oui	Non	Au revoir
German	Bitte	Danke	Ja	Nein	Auf Wiedersehen
Spanish	Por favor	Gracias	Sí	No	Adiós

Instead of always giving students formatted tables to type, the teacher should ask them to research the necessary information and to prepare their own tables in handwritten form. The teacher might, for example, send students into the community to find individuals who speak other languages than those included in Table 4 and to handwrite the appropriate common courtesy expressions for those languages on their initial copies of the table. Students will be surprised by how many additional languages and common courtesy expressions can be added to an augmented version of Table 4.

The teacher could also have students research other common expressions not provided in Table 4. For example, the students could inquire about the expressions used in various languages to say hello to other people. Once students have collected the desired information in handwritten form, they could create an expanded version of Table 4. The students could exchange their draft copies of collected information until all students have keyboarded all of the gathered information.

For variation the students could alphabetize the information in the table by language and keyboard the table in reordered form. Students could also vary the format details of the reordered tables; for example, they could change a simple table to a boxed table and/or change the spacing within the body of the table.

The teacher could evaluate the effort expended to collect additional expressions, the ability to organize the tabular information, and the ability to apply generally accepted keyboarding standards.

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Creative teachers might use the gathered information from the international-theme tables to develop an international information database in computer-applications courses. Such databases could then be used as resources for other courses that incorporate international business-communication themes.

The typing of forms is another frequent keyboarding activity. An international traveler will be required to complete a passport-application form to acquire a passport for entry into most countries. In addition to a passport, a visa is also required for travel into some countries.

The teacher can obtain passport- and visa-application forms from most federal courthouses, post offices, and travel agencies. If the classroom is equipped with computers, the teacher could use a scanner to copy the forms onto the students' computer disks for completion. If a scanner is not available, the teacher can have the students recreate the forms using a desktop publishing or word processing software program and then complete the forms. For classrooms equipped with typewriters, the teacher could provide students with photocopies of the forms to complete at their keyboards.

The teacher should briefly discuss the purpose of the passport and visa and explain the types of information the students will need to gather in order to complete all sections of the forms. The students could then keyboard the application forms. This activity might be enhanced by having students scan or electronically take personal photographs for their accompanying application forms.

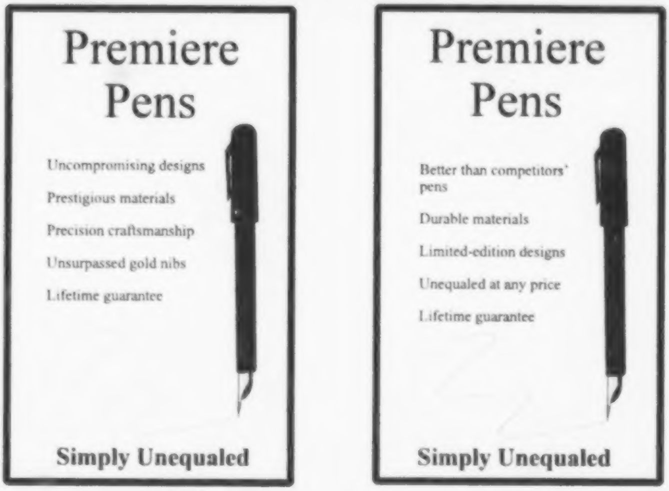
The teacher could evaluate the accuracy, completeness, and neatness of the keyboarded application forms. If photographs are included with the application forms, the teacher could also evaluate the ability of students to scan and/or to size the accompaniments.

(The preceding subsection was contributed by Cheri Jimeno.)

Marketing education-related courses. Since international business communication is part and parcel of international marketing, marketing teachers can find many ways to add international business communication-related content to their marketing courses. Two infusion ideas related to different aspects of marketing follow.

While developing understanding about how advertising is used to communicate with customers, a marketing teacher can easily add relevant international dimensions. After the students have devised advertisements to sell products of their choice to a particular segment of the domestic market, the marketing teacher could have them modify their advertisements to sell that same product to a specified market segment in another country. To do so successfully, students would have to understand how to communicate effectively with people from other cultures. They would need to find out about the beliefs, values, and assumptions of the members of the specified international market segment. They would need to know what characteristics are associated with effective communication by members of that market segment. They would need to understand how directly or indirectly members of that market segment communicate, as well as the channels of communication that those members prefer when receiving product-related information. Only when these types of information are thoughtfully brought together can students devise culturally sensitive modifications to their advertisements that reflect the major differences between the cultures of the two market segments.

Figure 26
Understand That Successful Advertisements Are Culturally Sensitive



Premiere Pens

Uncompromising designs
Prestigious materials
Precision craftsmanship
Unsurpassed gold nibs
Lifetime guarantee

Simply Unequaled

Premiere Pens

Better than competitors' pens
Durable materials
Limited-edition designs
Unequaled at any price
Lifetime guarantee

Simply Unequaled

You should realize that advertisements that are successful in selling products worldwide are attuned to the local culture.

When the students have completed both advertisements, then the marketing teacher can ask each student to discuss the product being marketed, the characteristics of the two targeted groups, the similarities in the advertisements and the related reasons, and the differences in the advertisements and the related reasons. At the close of each presentation, the marketing teacher could have the presenter address relevant questions from his or her peers.

When evaluating this assignment, a marketing teacher could consider a variety of factors, including the understanding of advertising principles, the understanding of the communication systems and patterns in the U.S. and another country, the adaptation of advertising principles to target identified market segments in two different countries, and the oral-communication proficiency of students when speaking in public.

While developing understanding of negotiating processes, a marketing teacher can add cross-cultural perspectives. Not only should he or she create understanding about how American marketers negotiate, but also he or she should create understanding about how marketers from competing countries negotiate. For example, he or she might question students about how they feel during periods of silence, especially long ones. After reaching consensus that periods of silence typically cause most Americans to feel uneasy, the teacher might point out that unlike American negotiators, Japanese negotiators perceive periods of silence to be constructive and beneficial. Silence can be used for reflecting, consolidating, and strategizing. In fact, Japanese negotiators sometimes use periods of silence to make American negotiators feel uncomfortable enough that they make concessions just to keep the negotiations alive. Depending on the backgrounds and maturity levels of the students, the teacher might continue by asking the class to supply other examples to augment the discussion or by providing other examples himself or herself.

For a follow-up activity a marketing teacher might divide the students into small groups and ask them to investigate the negotiation strategies and patterns used by marketers from other countries. The teacher can either specify the countries or let each group choose its country so long as two groups are not investigating the practices of the same country. He or she can provide a general or detailed structure for the investigation as appropriate. Students can gather the needed information from a variety of print and nonprint sources. The teacher should also encourage each group to gather some information about typical negotiating practices firsthand by interviewing a businessperson from that country. If businesspersons are not readily available, perhaps other natives of the country could provide insightful information about negotiation processes in their homelands. Depending on the preferences of the teacher, each group can share its information in written and/or oral format.

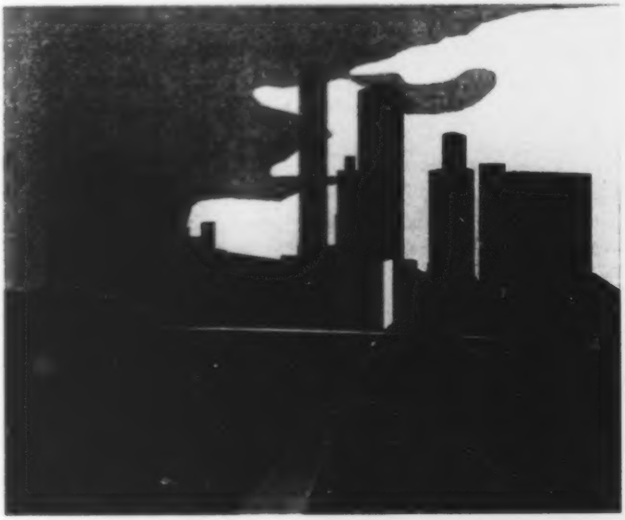
Among aspects of the negotiation-related learning for evaluation are these: attentive listening to and active participation during the lecture and discussion; active participation throughout the group work, including the gathering, organizing, and preparing of the information; the quality—perhaps quantity, too—of the gathered information; the presentation of the information in conformity with the standards set by the teacher; and other factors at the discretion of the teacher.

Microcomputer/technology applications-related courses. While software has been the axis around which typical computer-applications courses revolve, the focus can and should also include developing knowledges, skills, and attitudes about international business communication. The Internet is but one vehicle on the Information Superhighway that has moved the global-community concept light-years ahead, resulting in the capability of quickly and inexpensively communicating from one part of the world to another.

Schools fortunate enough to have the necessary hardware and telephone lines for Internet access have a wealth of new curriculum opportunities available. Computer/technology teachers must be willing to develop and implement a new curriculum. In some courses the students may already be knowledgeable about many aspects of communicating worldwide and, in fact, are already "surfing the Net" at home. Teachers may want to consider the abilities of their students as they rewrite course objectives and assignments.

Figure 27

Realize That the Information Superhighway Facilitates Global Business Communication



You should realize that the Internet is one vehicle that expedites international business communication on the Information Superhighway.

A cumulative project that uses software taught in the microcomputer courses combined with communication skills can be effective in helping students prepare for the technology-driven global world of work. The project would work well as an integrated group activity after completing applications using spreadsheet, database, telecommunication, word-processing, and desktop-publishing software. The teacher may want to provide some general guidelines for the project but should encourage students to be creative in meeting the project goals.

The teacher could divide the class into teams of four or five students, attempting to place at least one student who is particularly adept at Internet usage on each team. Each team should select a foreign country and plan a two-week summer tour for students visiting there. Plans should include such factors as transportation, lodging, sightseeing, and activities appropriate to the age group of the students. Assignments that must be completed could include any or all of the following: a tour itinerary; a comprehensive budget; a flyer to advertise the tour; a brochure describing places of interest and planned activities; and an information sheet about weather, clothing, language, currency-exchange rates, and country-specific customs and behaviors with which tour participants need to be familiar. The teacher should encourage students to use resources available on the Information Superhighway, as well as to communicate directly with people, including students in the selected country, to obtain relevant information. At the end of the project time period, each team could give a sales presentation using the materials developed to sell its tour to classmates.

If a teacher has a classroom with limited or no access to the Internet, he or she can have the students produce the same documents using available software and library sources. Other aspects of the project could be identical except for the online interactivity.

The teacher might evaluate the number of sources consulted and documented; the different types of software used; the accuracy, quality, and attractiveness of materials produced; the individual and team effort, including appropriate division of tasks; and the oral sales presentation. The teacher could give credit for each verified source that responds with requested information, or the teacher could give credit for all verifiable attempts to solicit information. In addition, the teacher could structure the assignments so that team members must decide which software tools to use and then be rewarded for their appropriate application.

(The preceding subsection was contributed by Donna Henderson.)

Office occupations-related courses. The purpose of the office occupations courses is to provide a culminating review of learning experiences that develop office and administrative skills. There are numerous ways to infuse the international business communication-related content into office occupations courses. One topic that lends itself to the infusion of international business communication-related content is the business-travel itinerary.

To engage the students actively in the learning process, the teacher could assign students to small groups charged with the task of securing all necessary arrangements for a business trip to another country. To facilitate this project, the teacher could provide a scenario to each group, identifying various components the students would need to research in order to develop the travel itinerary and to make travel arrangements. For example, one group may be asked to plan a five-day business trip to London for a merchandising executive. Using transparencies, the teacher could pose several research questions concerning the students' assigned country, which in turn should lead the students to think of numerous related research questions.

The teacher could begin the inquiry by suggesting that the students examine the legal requirements for entry into the country. This question may lead to a discussion about passports, visas, and other requirements for entering or exiting each country. The teacher may want to provide an overview of how the cultural climate can influence the security of the country. Related topics could include economic conditions, government stability, religious influences, and ethnic diversity. The teacher could then direct the students to the appropriate sources for obtaining information about passports. Using a traveler's guidebook for Britain, the students would discover that a passport is required for all non-European Union visitors entering the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Figure 28
Understand That a Passport Is Required for Most International Assignments

You should be prepared for business-communication assignments abroad by having a valid passport.

Another question could focus on transportation to and from and within the country. Subtopics that may evolve from this question include differences in time, the use of public transportation systems, and driving customs and road signs. Again using the London example, the students would find that London is served by several airports, including Heathrow, Gatwick, and Stansted. The students would also find there are numerous options available for ground transportation, including rail, bus, taxi, and rental cars; however, these options vary greatly in price and convenience, as well as from airport to airport. Students could be encouraged to acquire city maps, bus and rail schedules, and other reference materials to aid them in choosing the best modes of transportation. The students could then be asked to justify their transportation decisions based on feasibility, convenience, and value.

A discussion about hotel accommodations, restaurants, and shopping could elicit questions involving cultural differences in tipping, dining, and exchanging currency. Many hotel chains that are located throughout the world have toll-free telephone numbers that students can use to access information about hotel accommodations. For example, Hilton Hotels and Resorts is an international chain with properties throughout the world and can be reached with a toll-free number, 1-800-445-8667. Students researching the London trip would find that there are several Hilton properties located in the Greater London area.

Finally, a discussion about the business-meeting environment could help students develop an understanding of appropriate culturally based business etiquette. This discussion could lead to questions about differences in business attire, greetings, use of body language, and forms of hospitality that are peculiar to each culture or country. For example, because the business attire for London is generally conservative, the students may suggest that the business executive wear a dark suit with a coordinated blouse or shirt and tie.

The required components of the related application activity could be numerous or limited depending on the scope of the project and the availability of time. Other components might include making telephone calls, both domestic and international; using mail and courier services; arranging for sightseeing tours and other forms of entertainment; and the like.

Once the students have an understanding of the types of information they are seeking and are informed about the available information resources by either the teacher or the librarian, the students should be given hands-on opportunities to locate the information. These research activities could be completed during class sessions or outside of class sessions.

When the students have secured their information, the teacher should present instruction about developing the formal itinerary and supporting documents. Instruction might include guidelines regarding the appropriate format, organization, accuracy, and completeness of the written report. The teacher may want to provide a sample itinerary and supporting documents for a typical business trip to a domestic or foreign city. This model would not only assist students in developing their own itineraries but also provide the basis for a discussion about how cultures differ in the ways they conduct business.

Evaluation of student performance could include the active and cooperative participation among group members; the quality of the written and oral itinerary-related reports and supporting documents; the appropriateness of the itinerary time schedule considering difference in time zones, recuperation from jet lag, traffic delays, and perceptions about time; the ability to stay within time and travel-budget limitations; and other factors emphasized by the teacher.

(The preceding subsection was contributed by Sherri Lee Arosteguy.)

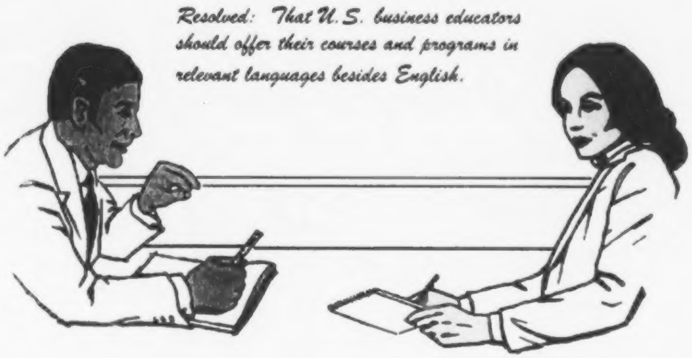
Teacher education-related courses. Business teacher educators can infuse into their courses for prospective and practicing teachers ideas about languages and their usefulness for conveying business content to diverse audiences around the world. Regardless of nationality, a business educator uses one or more languages to instruct others about business-related subjects.

For example, in an undergraduate business teacher-education course, a business teacher educator might divide the students into two groups of equal size to prepare arguments either for or against the offering of business-education courses and programs in languages other than English in U.S. localities with significant numbers of either recent immigrants or international businesses. At the close of a preparatory period, he or she could have the opposing sides elect two spokespersons each, who during the following class period debate this proposition for either a set period of time or for one class period: Resolved: That U.S. business educators should offer their courses and programs in relevant languages besides English.

A business teacher educator might evaluate the resulting debate on such bases as the breadth and depth of team preparation; the relevancy, logic, and persuasiveness of the argued positions; the credibility of cited sources if time is provided for library research; and other factors he or she perceives to be relevant. To motivate entire teams toward peak preparation and performance, a business teacher educator might reward team members with differing amounts of credit depending on whether their team wins, loses, or ties the debate.

At the graduate level a business teacher educator might have prospective or practicing teachers explore the typical language-related backgrounds of teachers of business-related subjects in selected countries around the world as part of a comprehensive international comparison of business-educations systems. Via primary and secondary research, enrollees could engage in cross-cultural comparative study of educational systems to find answers to such questions as these: What is or are the primary language(s) of the country? What are the prevailing countrywide attitudes toward monolingualism, bilingualism, and multilingualism? What is or are the primary language(s) for teaching business subjects? How does a teacher typically go about developing the appropriate language-related skills for teaching business-related subjects? What language-related courses or other language-related requirements must be successfully completed to qualify for a business-related teaching credential in the country? How are the language-related components of the business teacher training and certification process in that country like and unlike the requirements in the state in which you reside? Why do differences in the language-related backgrounds of business educators occur in the two locations? Answers to such questions along

Figure 29
Consider Using a Debate to Enliven Learning


Resolved: That U.S. business educators should offer their courses and programs in relevant languages besides English.

You should think about invigorating the learning environment through a variety of means such as an occasional debate.

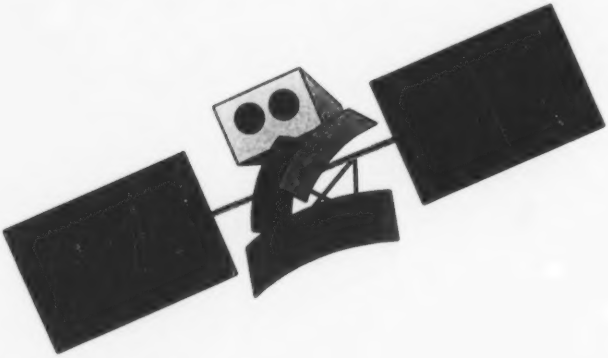
with supporting documentation could be presented in written or oral form at the discretion of the business teacher educator.

The business teacher educator might evaluate the resulting product on such bases as the breadth and depth of uncovered information, remembering that researching specific information about other countries is both challenging and time-consuming; the appropriateness and thoroughness of the answers to the guide questions; the apparent understanding of the ramifications of language-related factors on the two business teacher-education systems; and the degree of compliance with generally accepted presentation standards whether a written and/or an oral form is specified.

Telecommunications-related courses. The teacher can divide telecommunication topics into two broad areas: data and voice. Data telecommunications incorporates computers, local area networks, and wide area networks to communicate with individuals at other locations. Voice telecommunications uses telephone services including computerized private branch exchanges (PBXs) and communication devices such as wires, coaxial cables, microwaves, satellites, and fiber optics to communicate with individuals at other locations. While data and voice are often perceived as separate entities, in reality they must merge in order to transmit messages short or long distances.

The teacher could begin by discussing the invention of the telephone and how related innovations have made it possible to communicate with almost anyone in the world. Where lines cannot be dug into the ground or where transmission

Figure 30
Remember That Satellites Are But One Type of Telecommunication Device



You should realize that devices such as satellites have created new opportunities for international business communication.

stations cannot be placed on mountains, satellites have been placed in space to provide a means for communicating. Telephones, satellites, and computer systems are the means by which individuals can communicate short or long distances.

To illustrate advances in telecommunication systems, the teacher could have students use a variety of telephone systems, including a string-and-tin-can system, a wire-connection system, and a cellular-connection system. The teacher could describe the evolution of telecommunication systems by suggesting that the string-and-tin-can system is analogous to early switchboard and rotary telephone systems, that the wired system is analogous to standard telephone systems currently used in many countries, and that the cellular system is analogous to telecommunication systems available in technologically advanced countries. The teacher could also invite a guest speaker from a telephone company to give a complementary presentation about advances in telecommunication equipment and services around the world.

The teacher could then have students research the types of telecommunication systems used within various countries, contrasting those used in developed and developing countries. Students could be encouraged to use such resources as international telephone guides available from long-distance providers for this activity. Students can also locate information about the telecommunication systems in a particular country by accessing a World Wide Web browser such as Netscape. The students could conclude this activity by listing technological and non-technological barriers that might exist when international telephone calls are placed.

For example, students might describe why a system with rotary telephones connected with large-gauge copper wires such as is found in Sudan requires less maintenance than a digitized system with many telephones and computers connected with thousands of fine-gauge wires or fiber optic cables as is found in the U.S. However, rotary telephone systems do not have direct-dialing, call waiting, and other telecommunication capabilities available with more-sophisticated systems. An American traveler in Sudan might have difficulty telephoning back to the U.S. because he or she is unable to dial direct and cannot speak Modern Standard Arabic or Arab Sudanese, the languages most fluently spoken by the Sudanese long-distance service operators.

The teacher could evaluate the student analysis of the telephone systems in various countries, considering the number of countries researched and the quality of the descriptive information and analysis. The teacher could also evaluate the appropriateness of the list of technological and non-technological communication barriers.

Further, the teacher could emphasize the importance of telephone codes when dialing within the U.S. and internationally. For example, to place a direct-dial call to a person in Salt Lake City, Utah, from another location in the U.S., the caller needs the area code for Utah, 801, and the individual's telephone number. Over 200 countries and territories outside the U.S. can also be called using direct dialing. As shown in Figure 31, to place a direct-dial international call, the caller should: (a) dial the hotel or business access code and wait for a dial tone; (b) dial 011, the international access code; (c) dial the country code; (d) dial the area or city code; and (e) dial the local telephone number. For example, to telephone the Brazil/Rio Convention Bureau from the U.S., the student would get a dial tone before dialing 011, the international access code; dial 55, the international country code; dial 21, the city code; and dial 259-6165, the local number. The teacher should explain that if direct dialing cannot access a country, the caller would need to use the services of a long-distance operator for dialing assistance. Using long-

Figure 31
Know the Steps to Place a Direct-Dial International Telephone Call

1	2	3	4	5
Hotel or Business Access Code	International Access Code	Country Code	Area or City Code	Local Telephone Number

You should realize that international direct dialing involves five easy steps.

distance rate charts from several providers, the teacher might also discuss the variation in rates and services that are available, emphasizing that rates are generally more expensive during the prime business hours (8 a.m. to 5 p.m.) at the call-origin site and less expensive during evening and weekend hours at the call-origin site.

The teacher could have students use international telephone guides and other sources to find the area codes for a number of states and cities and the country codes for various nations. Specific information about international rates, country and area or city codes, and dialing instructions can also be obtained by dialing AT&T International Rate and Dialing Information at 1-800-222-0600.

The teacher might evaluate the effort expended while locating the telephone codes and the accuracy of the collected information. The teacher could also evaluate the ability of students to select appropriate information sources.

Electronic mail (E-mail) provides another means by which students can communicate internationally. A message can be sent to an international office as easily as it can be sent to a local office. The teacher could introduce the topic by comparing the style of an E-mail message to that of other forms of communication. For example, an E-mail address serves the same function as a postal address yet is organized differently. The first component identifies the user. The second component is separated from the user name by an @ sign and identifies the domain names--where the user is located. This component may contain several fields, each separated by a period or dot. The third component contains three letters defining the address domain--edu = education, com = commercial, gov = government, mil = military, or org = organization--for domestic E-mail addresses. International E-mail addresses customarily conclude with a two-letter country abbreviation. For example, mbeazley@extro.ucc.su.OZ.AU is the E-mail address for Dr. Malcolm R. Beazley of Sydney, Australia, the honorary international president for Computer Pals Across the World (CPAW), a global educational electronic network serving teachers, students, and their communities. The E-mail address risc@esp.edac.uva.nl is for the European Schools Project headquartered at the University of Amsterdam in The Netherlands; it promotes cross-cultural interaction with educational institutions in European countries.

After discussing how E-mail messages are formatted, sent, and received, the teacher could have students send E-mail messages to students in other English-speaking countries. Students might share information about such diverse matters as dating practices, popular music, common foods, transportation means, and political and economic systems. To implement this activity the teacher should be aware that several bulletin board services provide listserv lists (automated mailing lists of individuals with common interests) designed specifically for global communication among high school students. For example, The Global Classroom List provides a forum for international student E-mail discussion. Internet resources such as *Education on the Internet* (Ellsworth, 1994) provide hundreds of specific K-12 and postsecondary Internet educational addresses with descriptions and instructions about how to access them.

The teacher could evaluate the activity on the effort expended by students to communicate with international subscribers, realizing that not all sincere, good-faith attempts will yield responses; the use of generally accepted standards for electronic communication; the appropriateness of the messages; and other factors the teacher perceives to be relevant.

(The preceding subsection was contributed by Diana J. Green.)

Training and development-related courses. Training and development students should understand and become effective in communicating with an increasingly diverse group of domestic and international colleagues. In training and development-related courses, learners of different ages typically come together for a shared goal of professional development. Very often the training takes place in a business or industry setting; it upgrades professional capabilities related to a particular job function or to a new technology application. Dimensions of international business communication can be infused around technology-application or professional-growth objectives.

Cultural-clarification exercises and role-playing exercises could be key activities for reinforcing awareness and understanding of similarities and differences within and among cultural groups. The teacher-facilitator can begin by having learners develop a chart illustrating the similarities and differences among class members based on various factors.

Figure 32
Acknowledge Diversity Within Training and Development Groups

You should be sensitive to similarities and differences when communicating with diverse audiences.

For example, assume a training and development course has been created for 12 data-entry operators from a metropolitan-based company for the purposes of upgrading their knowledges, skills, and attitudes. The learners could develop a chart about their class illustrating distinguishing factors such as age, gender, birth country, citizenship, race, ethnicity, languages spoken, and the like (see Table 5). The group will discover that in some categories its members are quite similar, while in others they are quite different. The most common factor among them is gender--10 of the learners are female. The next most common factor is their citizenship--9 are U.S. citizens. At this point the learners may conclude that they are a very homogenous group; however, upon further analysis they will discover that only 6 were born in the U.S., only 6 are white, and less than half speak General American English as their first language, although all speak some variety of English. They will also discover that they range in age from 18 to 66. Perhaps the most individualistic factor is the ethnic subculture to which each belongs.

This activity could lead to a discussion about how cultural differences influence the way people think, act, and communicate; how they view the world and themselves; and how their social institutions are organized. The teacher-facilitator should caution the learners about cultural stereotyping, being careful to point out not only individual differences within cultural groupings but also differences among cultural groupings. The discussion could focus on the importance of understanding not only similarities but also differences among people in the work environment.

The learners could then be organized into two groups--nationals and non-nationals. Since U.S. citizens (nationals) predominate, they can be further subdivided into U.S. citizens of Northern European, Hispanic, and other extractions. The three national subgroups and the non-national group would have the responsibility of identifying the similarities that unite their members. Because each subgroup member has a different ethnic heritage, he or she could also focus attention on differences within the subgroup. Through both group and individual research efforts over one or more training periods, learners can then compile information about their general cultural and subcultural characteristics. At this point in the process, the groups can come back together to share and to chart the characteristics of the groups. Adapting the grid structure recommended by Pai (1990), the teacher-facilitator can have the learners record the detailed information. Table 6 suggests relevant categories based upon major characteristics of the 12 data-entry employees.

Other categories could be placed along the left margin of Table 6. For example, based on Beamer's (1992) and Varner and Beamer's (1995) works, specific categories relating to thinking and knowing, doing and achieving, the self, the organization of society, and the universe could be relevant. Based on Victor's (1992) work, the following categories could be used: language, environment and technology, social organization, contexting (the directness or indirectness of communication) and face-saving (the relative importance of min-

Table 5
Selected Characteristics of a Training Group

Learner	Age	Gender	Birth Country	Citizenship Country	Race	Ethnic Affiliation	Language(s) Spoken
Jane Williams	66	Female	United States of America	United States of America	White	Irish-American	General American English
Peggy Dobryski	18	Female	United States of America	United States of America	White	Polish-American	General American English, Polish
Ralph Walls	25	Male	United States of America	United States of America	American Indian	Ute Tribe	General American English, Ute
Elfrieda Long	59	Female	Germany	United States of America	White	German-American	Low German, General American English
Eudora Whitesides	46	Female	United States of America	United States of America	Black	African-American	Black English
Maria Gonzales	19	Female	Mexico	United States of America	White	Mexican-American	Mexicano Spanish, General American English
Luis Carrillo	36	Male	United States of America	United States of America	White	Spanish-American	Castellano Spanish, General American English
Sandi Hashimoto	28	Female	United States of America	United States of America	Asian Pacific Islander	Japanese-American	General American English, Japanese
Shao-Jan Li	43	Female	People's Republic of China	People's Republic of China	Asian Pacific Islander	Chinese	Mandarin Chinese, Received Pronunciation English
Kay Hoskins	34	Female	United Kingdom	United Kingdom	White	English	Estuary English, French
Yoko Watanabe	51	Female	Japan	Japan	Asian Pacific Islander	Japanese	Japanese, Nonstandard General American English
Adelina Huerta	48	Female	Jamaica	United States of America	Black	Jamaican	Jamaican Creole (Pidgin English)

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Table 6
Subcultural Variables Within a Training Group

	Nationals									Non-nationals		
	Northern European			Hispanic		Other Extractions				Other Extractions		
Category	German-American	Irish-American	Polish-American	Mexican-American	Spanish-American	African-American	Jamaican	Japanese-American	Native American (Ute Tribe)	Chinese	English	Japanese
World View												
Values												
Learning												
Identity												
Cognitive Style												
Communication Style												

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imizing personal embarrassment), authority conception, nonverbal communication, and temporal conception (time). Still other possible categories, based on Chaney and Martin's (1995b) work, are the following: universal systems; cultural values; oral, nonverbal, and written communication patterns; language; business and social etiquette; negotiation processes and strategies; and laws.

Each of the four subgroups would then have the task of creating a role play illustrating a relevant international business situation. The role play setup would include a handout that details the international business situation, describes the setting, assigns roles to the participants, and lists the resources needed to carry out the dramatization. The role-playing situations could include such matters as telephoning a foreign subsidiary for missing information, conversing with visiting employees from a foreign subsidiary, and training a colleague from a foreign subsidiary to use new application software. Learners would implement the relevant material contained in Table 6 as they act out their assigned roles, demonstrating their appreciation and understanding of cultural similarities and differences.

The teacher-facilitator should realize that the review of each role play is as important as the actual acting out of each dramatization. The review provides an opportunity to debrief the participants and audience, a forum to evaluate effective and ineffective cross-cultural communication, and a means to process the multiple factors that lead to correct and incorrect cultural judgments. The teacher-facilitator can use a variety of strategies during followup review sessions, including open class discussion, individual written observations, and small-group sharing to reach culturally sound business communication-related conclusions.

Evaluation of the outcomes of the research, role play, and review activities can be accomplished through observation of the learners during all phases. The teacher-facilitator may find the following evaluative questions useful: Are there noticeable differences in the working relationships among learners from the beginning to the end of the training? Is there evidence such as increased learner participation or other behavior that demonstrates positive changes in cross-cultural communicative behaviors? Are the learners demonstrating improved culturally based judgments? Throughout the evaluative process the teacher-facilitator must take care not to evaluate on the basis of criteria that favor a particular cultural or subcultural group. Through such experiences learners and teacher-facilitators alike should come to value diversity and to appreciate cultural similarities and differences that are a part of the international business community.

(The preceding subsection was contributed by Marcia Bush.)

Conclusion

Teachers can facilitate international business communication whether they choose to implement the separate-course approach or the infusion approach. Although each approach has its own strengths and weaknesses and methodology, either approach will yield beneficial outcomes if it is carefully implemented. When teachers thoughtfully adapt and prudently implement the suggestions for developing international business communication-related knowledges, skills, and attitudes found in this document and elsewhere, they will contribute significantly toward the preparation of prospective and practicing businesspersons for active participation in the global marketplace.

To facilitate international business communication is to facilitate the transaction of international business, for communication is the backbone of international business. Those who teach international business communication bear an important responsibility. Their work is vital because it influences the livelihood and the future of the country and of its citizens.

May the efforts of teachers to facilitate international business communication be personally and professionally satisfying, and may their students be rewarded with exemplary international business-communication knowledges, skills, and attitudes.

References

The following subsections, divided into books and periodicals and into media, provide reference citations to selected international business communication-related resources available at the time this publication was written. The listings do not include all possible instructional resources that the teacher of an international business communication-related course will find helpful; for example, almost all sources in such allied fields of study as communication, international business, psychology, anthropology, and sociology are excluded from the listings. Some of the existing books, especially Victor's (1992) *International Business Communication*, include extensive references to works in supporting fields of study.

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